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Stanley Diamond (Ed.)

TOWARD A MARXIST ANTHROPOLOGY

WORLD ANTHROPOLOGY

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Toward a Marxist Anthropology

World Anthropology

General Editor

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Toward a Marxist Anthropology

Problems and Perspectives

Editor

STANLEY DIAMOND

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General Editor's Preface

Marxism as both a movement and as a complex philosophy became tied to anthropology on its ideological side when Friedrich Engels introduced as underpinning both Charles Darwin's biological evolution and Lewis Henry Morgan's data on early social evolution. Hostility stemming from their own class position put off most anthropologists during the years following the emergence of the "Marxist" political movement; moreover, the rigidity of that movement reduced the scholarly flexibility of Marxist *critical* theory and this also effected the attitudes of anthropologists. In any case, very few anthropologists outside the Soviet Union discussed or entertained Marxist views until the colonial system began to disintegrate in the 1950's. Even then mainly reformist philosophies continued to dominate what Marxist views there were until the excolonial countries themselves developed their own anthropology at the same time that competition among Marxist philosophies (e.g. Chinese vs. Russian) became socially important. It is understandable, and historically significant, that a Congress attended by anthropologists from every part of the world should have served as the occasion to develop a conference, and this book, on the stimulating variety of Marxist approaches now developing in anthropology.

Like most contemporary sciences, anthropology is a product of the European tradition. Some argue that it is a product of colonialism, with one small and self-interested part of the species dominating the study of the whole. If we are to understand the species, our science needs substantial input from scholars who represent a variety of the world's cultures. It was a deliberate purpose of the IXth International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences to provide impetus in this direction. The *World Anthropology* volumes, therefore, offer a first glimpse of a human science in which members from all societies have

played an active role. Each of the books is designed to be self-contained; each is an attempt to update its particular sector of scientific knowledge and is written by specialists from all parts of the world. Each volume should be read and reviewed individually as a separate volume on its own given subject. The set as a whole will indicate what changes are in store for anthropology as scholars from the developing countries join in studying the species of which we are all a part.

The IXth Congress was planned from the beginning not only to include as many of the scholars from every part of the world as possible, but also with a view toward the eventual publication of the papers in high-quality volumes. At previous Congresses scholars were invited to bring papers which were then read out loud. They were necessarily limited in length; many were only summarized; there was little time for discussion; and the sparse discussion could only be in one language. The IXth Congress was an experiment aimed at changing this. Papers were written with the intention of exchanging them before the Congress, particularly in extensive pre-Congress sessions; they were not intended to be read aloud at the Congress, that time being devoted to discussions — discussions which were simultaneously and professionally translated into five languages. The method for eliciting the papers was structured to make as representative a sample as was allowable when scholarly creativity — hence self-selection — was critically important. Scholars were asked both to propose papers of their own and to suggest topics for sessions of the Congress which they might edit into volumes. All were then informed of the suggestions and encouraged to re-think their own papers and the topics. The process, therefore, was a continuous one of feedback and exchange and it has continued to be so even after the Congress. The some two thousand papers comprising *World Anthropology* certainly then offer a substantial sample of world anthropology. It has been said that anthropology is at a turning point; if this is so, these volumes will be the historical direction-markers.

As might have been foreseen in the first post-colonial generation, the large majority of the Congress papers (82 percent) are the work of scholars identified with the industrialized world which fathered our traditional discipline and the institution of the Congress itself: Eastern Europe (15 percent); Western Europe (16 percent); North America (47 percent); Japan, South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand (4 percent). Only 18 percent of the papers are from developing areas: Africa (4 percent); Asia-Oceania (9 percent); Latin America (5 percent). Aside from the substantial representation from the U.S.S.R. and the nations of Eastern Europe, a significant difference between this corpus of written material and that of other Congresses is the addition of the large proportion of contributions from Africa, Asia, and Latin America. "Only 18 percent" is two to four times as great a proportion as that of other

Congresses; moreover, 18 percent of 2,000 papers is 360 papers, 10 times the number of "Third World" papers presented at previous Congresses. In fact, these 360 papers are more than the total of *all* papers published after the last International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences which was held in the United States (Philadelphia, 1956).

The significance of the increase is not simply quantitative. The input of scholars from areas which have until recently been no more than subject matter for anthropology represents both feedback and also long-awaited theoretical contributions from the perspectives of very different cultural, social, and historical traditions. Many who attended the IXth Congress were convinced that anthropology would not be the same in the future. The fact that the Xth Congress (India, 1978) will be our first in the "Third World" may be symbolic of the change. Meanwhile, sober consideration of the present set of books will show how much, and just where and how, our discipline is being revolutionized.

Readers of this book will be interested in others in the series which treat anthropological theory, social and cultural problems of the world as perceived by anthropologists, and the history and politics of the profession itself.

Chicago, Illinois SOL TAX
November 20, 1978

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Introduction: Critical versus Ideological Marxism

STANLEY DIAMOND

The sequence of essays presented here reproduces the logic of the symposium "Problems and Possibilities of a Marxist Ethnology" (IXth ICAES) from which they are derived. This logic is obvious and requires no further comment from me. However, certain programmatic and substantive remarks may be in order. So far as the program was concerned I interpreted my task as Chairman of the meetings as, above all (apart from keeping a principled peace), to bring together for concentrated critical discussion, the widest possible variety of scholars who situate themselves in the Marxist tradition, with the widest possible national representation.

The latter effort was somewhat more successful than the former. While it was possible to recruit phenomenological Marxists (or Marxist phenomenologists), Marxist structuralists (and vice versa), Marxist existentialists, Hegelian Marxists, Marxist feminists, and even mechanical Marxists, we failed to include the Rumanians whose brilliant academic work I was then ignorant of, were rejected ambiguously by the Yugoslavs, and ignored by the Chinese. Nonetheless, given our necessarily limited number, the geographic and topical range was impressive.

Naturally, one anticipated a broad and basic division between the anthropologists from the self-defined Marxist polities and those from the bourgeois democracies and excolonial (or neocolonial) areas. This division made itself evident in a particularly interesting way, which I shall discuss in some detail below, on the last day of the symposium, but it can generally be characterized as a division between ideological Marxism and the critical tradition. By ideological Marxism, I mean something quite specific, namely, the pursuit of a line which is laid down by socially stunted "experts" in self-defined Marxist bureaucratic establishments including those party hierarchies which may be directly or indirectly associated with such establishments. Under these circumstances, "Marxism" is reduced to no

more than propaganda for the perpetuation and consolidation of a ruling class; it ceases to be a critical, self-critical, and dialectical instrument of analysis and action in the constitution, and definition, of socialism. It dwindles to mere ideology, an exercise in false consciousness. All this is well known. What is not so well known is that once Marxism is lobotomized, and loses its humane imagination, the organization of intellectual work is subdivided into mechanistically conceived disciplines, and scholarship is substantially reduced to positivist and empirical tasks. These latter are pursued under the banner of Marxism, but the individual scholar cannot critically deploy his Marxist understanding relative to his own society, nor may he seriously question the overall doctrinal interpretations of Marxism set forth by some bureaucratic functionary who may officially represent his discipline at court. The result is an illusory split between politics (that is, a critical politics) and scholarship which drives the scholar into feeble abstractions, on the one hand, and safe, socially rewarding inquiries, which may descend to opportunism or busy work, on the other. (There are, of course, those who have rejected this role and they deserve all our gratitude.) The scholar qua scholar is defined, in other words, as formally apolitical, and this paradoxical predicament of scholar, or thinker, or intellectual in an ideologically Marxist milieu parallels, consequences aside, the normative position of disciplinarians in capitalist structures, in which this exploitative aspect of the civilized division of labor, and rule, has been refined to a quite subtle degree.

The critical Marxist tradition, or rather, the critical tradition in self-conscious Western social thought (dating at least from the early eighteenth century), for which the work of Marx has provided the cutting edge during the past hundred years, is represented in most of the papers in this book. Moreover, it is re-emerging powerfully in Western academic, intellectual, and political circles, and requires no further elaboration here. But I should note that the impulses of the sixties have survived the generation that generated them; they have found more serious, focused, and more deeply political (that is, Marxist) expression. One is impressed by the absence of rhetoric, the hard work, and the radical imaginations of significant numbers of younger scholars, just as much as by the revolutionary fidelity of colleagues to whom the agitation of the sixties was finally a symptom, even if socially useful and culturally poignant. One need only glance at the profusions of radical and substantially cross-disciplinary journals during the past several years, in order to gauge the extent and force of the critical undercurrent to which I refer. I mention only a few of the more prominent: *Theory and Society* (edited primarily by Alvin Gouldner, the sociologist); *Marxist Perspectives* (edited primarily by Eugene Genovese, the historian); *Dialectical Anthropology* (edited by the writer); and *Critique of Anthropology* (edited by an editorial collective of graduate students in London).

I should also note that in the critical perspective neither the text nor the author is canonized nor rendered inaccessible as the preserve of certified secular priests. The critical tradition recalls the sentiment of Marx, preparing the way for his major work, that nothing was exempt from criticism, nothing must be and we must have the tenacity to accept that imperative. History has come full circle on this matter, and no system sustaining rationalization for programmed brutality, or unearthly future promise can be tolerated. We have learned in the modern world that means become ends, and that revolutionary bad faith is no better than reactionary bad faith. The representative of ideological Marxism may well reply that this is easy enough for so-called radical thinkers in bourgeoise democratic milieux to propound, but that the structures built by revolutions must be protected in a world system dominated by capitalism, and that killing the revolution in order to save it is the real measure of revolutionary bad faith. It is a hard answer to a hard question; the only critical response is that those of us who live and work in the belly of the monster must risk everything in the attempt to penetrate the alienation of everyday life and transform our own societies. We must understand that no revolution can survive, prosper, and make ultimately humane, life-enhancing choices in a capitalist-dominated world. So we are led to turn back upon ourselves, to stop depending, morally or otherwise, on the intellectual and practical efforts of people on the periphery of capitalism. *We* are, in effect, the major problem, the most involved and difficult one; Marxism originated in the Western European tradition of critical social thought and action, more specifically it is the synthesis of the critical consciousness arising under capitalism. The ultimate test of its historical authenticity still consists in its potential to analyze and transform the system which gave rise to it. The critical Marxist will understand that; he has made a certain wager (as Gramsci might say), and he will reject prescriptions originating elsewhere that he finds trivial, irrelevant, or destructive of revolutionary hope, while fully realizing that measures and maxims adopted abroad are directly related to hegemony at home in ways that two generations of disenchanted radicals have found it the better part of wisdom to ignore. The critical anthropologist in the Marxist tradition will also recognize that revolutions and rebellions have been a largely undocumented norm of civilization (history has not been written by the oppressed) while the notion of "legitimacy" is both a myth of the State and an academic shibboleth of the thinkers who subordinate themselves to it.

Turning now to the actual course of the meetings on which the book is based, four related issues not mentioned in the text, arose which are worth recalling (or so it seems at some distance from the original event). Three are relatively superficial and were, to one degree or another, resolved. The first involved the "semantic" definition of the Marxist endeavor: Krader contended that Marx had never defined his work as constituting a

doctrine of historical and/or dialectical *materialism*, and had, in fact (as distinct from Engels) never incorporated such terms into his written work. This astonished both the Russians and the Americans, who responded that the specific language (if Krader happened to be correct, which, as a formidable exegist, he might well prove to be) was irrelevant; the real issue remained the implications of the work itself. But this failed to meet Krader's point, namely, that Marx was not a systematic or doctrinaire materialist philosopher, endeavoring to close the circle of his thought, but rather a revolutionary historian, who had adopted a dialectical, rather than a classically logical, method of inquiry. The force of Krader's point, and the reaction to it, will be further understood if one recognizes the dimensions of the ideological Marxist edifice, and what is gained, and what we have lost, by the freezing of Marxist inquiry into dogma. Even if Krader's semantic contention (he was, of course, correct) lent itself in part to the uses of his own acknowledged Hegelianism, there is no doubt that its deeper thrust created a good deal of anxiety right around the table. It is perhaps of some incidental interest that neither the Russians nor anyone else felt confident enough to challenge the textual implication, and this may have accounted for the effort to reduce it to the merely terminological.

The second issue concerned the definition of structuralism, and is worth mentioning only because it suggests a (sometimes deliberate) confusion that goes beyond the exchange involved to the profession at large. At the same time, it reveals how the particularity of the critical Marxist approach can be reduced to an abstraction by an ideological mediation, in this case, structuralism. In the course of a rather reified discussion about history and anthropology, the clichéd distinction between the synchronic and the diachronic was brought into play. The latter pair of terms were then deployed by the structuralist Marxists, and not so Marxist structuralists, present to represent the distinction between structure and process (or, in this instance, history). Hence, structural*ism* appeared as no more than the adoption of a synchronic perspective, the analytic freezing of time in order to focus on a society in cross-section. Structuralism was thereby assimilated to the study of structures in general, and was made to seem a perfectly logical and routine endeavor. This camouflage of the particularity of *structuralism* was quickly penetrated. It was pointed out that all social analysts of whatever persuasion examine structures — all life, all aggregates are structured — but this does not convert all social analysts into *structuralists*, nor all life into a field for *structuralist* interpretation. The specific character of *structuralism* (complementary, nondialectical binary oppositions, isomorphic regularities throughout culture and nature, the "merely" phenomenological and illusory character of all transformations) constituted the definition of *structuralism*, and had no bearing on, for example, the Marxist definition

of *the structure of* capitalism. No one seemed to disagree with this interpretation of the issue.

The third issue was equally incidental and involved Godelier's elegant presentation of his interpretation of Pygmy religion, based primarily on Turnbull's work. It seemed to several of us that Godelier was developing a case for class differentiation and/or state development based on the emergence of religious authority alone (namely, the mediation of the spirit of the forest, the center of the Pygmy worldview). It was suggested that religious authority of an exploitative character never emerges *alone*, and that authority as such was not, in any case, the issue. Exploitative relationships, it was argued, are rooted in a complex social process (specialized division of labor, emergence of a bureaucratic center, production for exchange and extracting surplus value etc.) which then contextualize and transform religious usage, and turn customary authority of all sorts into the exploitative exercise of power. The isolation of religious authority as the origin of political authority is, in other words, a reification, which converts authority into an abstraction, while misreading the nature of aboriginal as opposed to civilized religious phenomena. Thus, the connection between any form of abstract reductionism and an ideological noncritical perspective was further disclosed. If authority "as such," for example, can be conceived as a structuralist constant in all cultures (the transformations being merely epiphenomenal), then no critical approach, more importantly, no revolutionary action, is possible. In short, the more things change, the more they remain the same; and the human intention is rendered impotent, an illusion. Godelier associated himself with this argument — the questioning presumably being the result of a mutual misunderstanding, and nothing further had to be said.

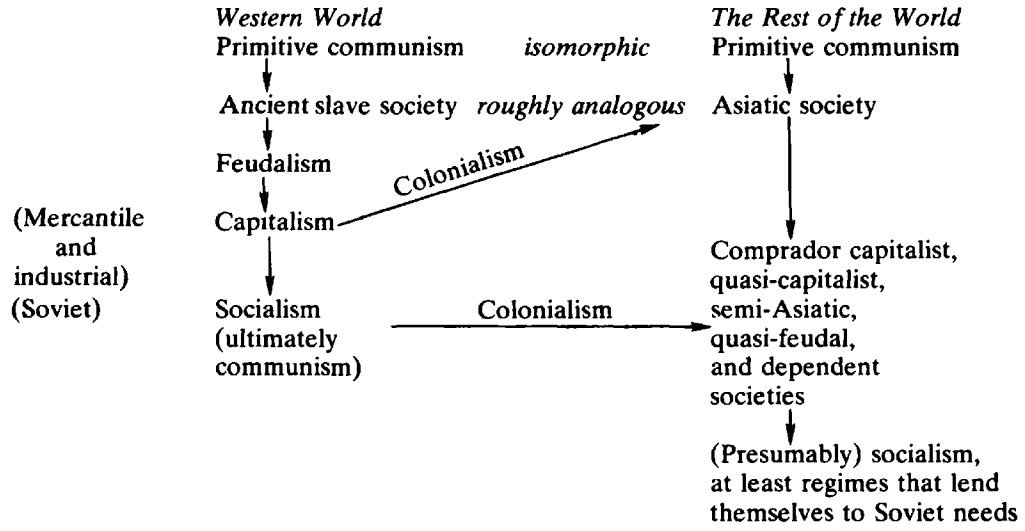
Not so with the fourth issue, which could not be resolved, and which illuminated serious divisions not only between the Soviet and other scholars present, but also between ideological and critical Marxism, and between mechanistic and dialectical formulations in general. The controversy (which proceeded courteously; we were, after all, at an international meeting of scholars) began with the presentation of Bromley's paper on the reperiodization of the Morgan–Engels projection of historical, in effect, evolutionary sequences. It was introduced by a question from an American representative: to what degree, if at all, was the Soviet revision based on fieldwork, or other experience, with living peoples, or was it entirely speculative and prehistoric beyond the reach of the ethnologist? The immediate, unqualified response was that all such periodizations were pure historical reconstructions, and could not, in the nature of the case, be based on fieldwork. Now the question that intrudes itself is: why the unequivocal character of this response? And the answer strikes to the core of the academic, and more than academic, division between two worlds of discourse, perception, and action.

This became evident somewhat later in the exchange when one of the Soviet delegates, who had worked with Northwest Coast Amerindians, stated that all living "primitive" peoples were degenerate survivors of the authentically primitive prehistoric period. One had, presumably, nothing significant to learn from them, either ethnohistorically or normatively. (Morgan's axial work, among the Iroquois, the basis of his famous statement about the reconstitution of the primitive, would have to be ignored here.) At that point, the French delegate (Godelier) who by then had joined forces with the Americans (in this instance, primarily myself) in the developing debate, remarked that, unlike his Soviet colleagues, he did not know of any criteria for judging people as "degenerate" and denied both the implication and the characterization. This general issue was sharpened further when the Soviet delegation rejected the notion of any contemporaneously existing, or historically proximate, reciprocally functioning, more or less autonomous, nonexploitative village community (the reference was to Africa). The village community was, presumably, either a fiction or a subordinate element in the hierarchical organization of Asiatic society. In the latter case, the integrity of the community was simply assumed to be nonexistent and its struggle against the superordinate authority was denied, or was, by implication, inevitably trivial and reactionary. This view apparently stemmed from a selective misreading of Marx on Asiatic society; it omitted the dialectic of the conflict between the center and the localities, whether in the form of rebellions, or as crystallized in mediating institutions, a struggle which, given appropriate political consciousness, could conceivably transform the society on the basis of the hitherto imprisoned localities, that is, from the ground up.

The questions we were asking now began to assume a clear and inescapable contour. What was the context of this official Soviet ethnological "progressivism," which rejected the relevance, if not the very existence, of contemporary primitive societies while distinguishing them from "village communities," real or imaginary. I will not dwell on this latter point, although it raises the interesting and allied question of the acceptability of designating a horticulturally grounded village community not associated with any superordinate structure, on, let us say, the Jos Plateau in North Central Nigeria as "primitive" (which I am perfectly prepared to do). That is, just how far, and how precisely do the Soviet ethnologists wish to put the concept of the primitive behind them? And why? The answer lies in official Soviet ideological Marxism and not in Soviet anthropology as such. Parenthetically, it is worth re-emphasizing that the boundaries of the discipline have not been established by the anthropologists but by political wardens with a keen eye for dissidents, who, of course, do not appear at international meetings (nonetheless they exist within the country and as emigrés), and most of them are *critical* Marxists, but that is an issue which cannot be explored here.

The Soviet establishment, including its anthropological branch, is well aware of the Marxist grounding of the whole concept of socialism, including classlessness, integration of labor, production for use, and allied phenomena, in the organization of primitive society. They understand that primitive society is, or can be, the dialectical precursor of the communist future in which they presumably believe, and that, in the absence of this deep historical grounding, socialism loses its theoretical anchor. It becomes just another abstract idea, rather than the experience, in particular form or forms, of the human race for most of our history (Marx understood and appreciated Morgan's work and noted with approval his anticipation of a future free of the rule of property, based on the "liberty, equality, and fraternity of the ancient gentes"). Therefore, the Soviet establishment cannot afford to abandon, or deny the centrality of, the concept of the primitive; it plays a peculiar role in Soviet Marxism. But the concept *can* be reduced to the merely archaeological; it can be relegated by the State to a museum of antiquities. At the same time, the categorization of contemporary primitives as degenerate relieves the anthropologist and the bureaucrat (or the anthropologist bureaucrat) of the necessity for examining the reality of policy (as opposed to the ideology based on the impressive but otiose constitution of 1936) in the Eurasian hinterland. Put another way, the dismissal of contemporary primitive societies reinforces the five-stage theory of evolutionary, and progressivist, determinism, which the Russian (always excepting the dissidents) share with mechanical materialists and unilinear evolutionists elsewhere, and the dismissal of fieldwork since there are no authentic primitives among whom it is possible, disengages the anthropologist from any responsibility he may feel, or identification he might generate with his subject of study. He need not be concerned with the problem of cultural diversity (which is not the same as *social* opportunity *within* the Soviet system), or with the imperial thrust of the Great Russians who were the architects of Soviet reconstruction in the vast "Russian" hinterland. The dispute, then, was not merely between Russians and Americans, or French, but was a theoretical conflict that illuminated, and symbolized, a significant, probably critical, area of the modern consciousness. The five-stage theory is, of course, drawn from Marx but has been converted into an iron law of history; it is universalized; Marxism becomes positivism. I should note that the sequence — primitive communism → ancient slave society → feudalism → capitalism → socialism-communism is confined by Marx to Western Europe. And even then the stages involved are viewed as contingent. They were not designed as a universal, and certainly not as a progressivist or inevitable, model of evolutionary development. But by adopting it as such, the Soviet establishment simultaneously negates the (irrevocably superceded) primitive as a possible basis for self-reflective socialist critique, establishes itself as the sole heir of a universalized

Western sequence, and rationalizes colonialism in the name of progress, abstractly with reference to the era of frank colonialism, and concretely with reference to Soviet domination. This ethnocentric genuflection to the sovereignty of Western civilization also had the effect of locking the rest of the world into the recurring cycle of Asiatic society (the rulers change, the structure remains the same), a cycle which could only have been broken by classic colonialism. This also attempts to echo Marx, but disregards what Hobsbawm has accurately perceived as Marx's final and unequivocal rejection of industrial and mercantile capitalism as a desirable or historically inevitable instrument for the opening up of "closed" Asiatic societies. He did not regard capitalism — as it seems to be regarded in Soviet ideological Marxism — as the next best thing to socialism, or as socialism's inescapable unilinear ancestor. The following diagram may be useful in summarizing this emerging picture:[1]



The typological point evident here should be re-emphasized: the future of the rest of the world is a direct, and necessary, result of Western intervention, first under capitalism, then under what is defined as socialism, which develops in its most viable and progressive form in the dynamic Western world center. In explication of this point, it deserves note that it is this interpretation of the dominant, presumably emancipating role of the West, which stimulated Ernst Gellner's diplomatic mission

[1] Although Engels assimilated the ancient slave societies of the classic European Mediterranean to the general category of Oriental (Asiatic) society, Marx maintained the distinction, the supposition being that ancient slave society was both peculiar to, and pivotal in, the Western evolutionary sequence in critical respects. But no Asiatic precursor to ancient slave society in the West has been indisputably established, although archaeological evidence is increasingly suggestive. At any rate, I have temporized here by indicating that ancient slave society is *roughly* analogous to Asiatic society; in any event the problem has no significant bearing on the point at issue.

to Moscow on behalf of a faltering and redundant British social anthropology. Although Gellner failed to understand Soviet stubbornness in retaining the five-stage theory of evolutionary development, particularly the initial, universal primitive phase, he certainly recognized a flourishing academic, officially sanctioned, establishment when he saw one. This rooting in of ideological Marxism, combined with the acknowledged power of the Soviet Union in the world at large may well have appeared to parallel, *mutatis mutandis*, the association of a sanctioned anthropology with an imperial England, similarly rationalized by the prospect of enlightenment by domination. In any event, Gellner's report called for a closer understanding, a detente as it were, between British social and Soviet academic anthropology; it was, after all, appropriate for what he referred to as the two schools of anthropology to put their heads together. In the course of reaching this conclusion Gellner found it expedient to attack (basely and ignorantly) the *critical* Marxist tradition as it has re-emerged in France, Germany, Eastern Europe, the United States, Latin America, and England, in favor of the official, ideological, and, it presumably followed, authentic Marxism of his hosts, a Marxism straight from the horse's mouth, and hence proven in practice. This pragmatic, imperial approach to the question also overlooked the dissident Soviet anthropologists, whose views have been censored, and who remain, for the most part, Marxists, but critical Marxists, even when they have chosen exile. Gellner, then, accomplished an interesting task in Moscow: while reflecting a certain nostalgia for power structures self-defined as ultimately benevolent, he came to terms with establishment Marxism, in a sense lent himself to its uses, sought to outflank the radical thinkers in his own country and elsewhere, and misrepresented British social anthropology as the major, dynamic school in the Western anthropological tradition. What he attempted *inadvertently* is more revealing, and speaks directly to the point: one ethnocentric, administrative, deceptively abstract discipline, sought alliance with another, and was prepared to resolve all significant disciplinary differences in the effort to maintain status and prestige. The politics of anthropology reflects the politics of the world of which it is a part.

The assumption of Western hegemony, as expressed in the mission of Soviet socialism, improves our understanding, not only of the attitude toward the primitive but also with reference to the denial of the existence of the nonexploitative village community. This is, of course, related to, if it is not simply a function of, the official Soviet attitude toward peasants. If internally nonexploitative village communities of peasants do *not* exist, then the logic of peasant-based revolutions loses one of its foundations. The Soviet bureaucracy, it should be recalled, abandoned the possibility of a revolutionary peasant international in the late 1920s, more or less coincident with the hardening of policy on the fate and potential of the

domestic peasantry. Although Russia was not a mature capitalist, and certainly not an *industrial* capitalist, polity at the time of the Bolshevik revolution, the subordination of the role of the peasants, the ideological focus on the five-stage theory, and the consequent interpretation of the Soviet State as somehow developing out of a capitalist matrix, emerged as the essential, self-defining dogma of the bureaucratic elite. The Soviet conflict with (Maoist) China reflects this basic difference in perspective in the role and character of the peasantry and on the village community as a recoverable matrix (albeit in different form) for socialist growth. And that would seem to be the context for the denial of the very *existence* of the village community by the Soviet anthropologists at the symposium in question.

The socialist self-determination of the greater part of humanity which lies outside the Western epicenter is the critical issue of our time. Therefore, it is also the critical issue in any anthropological enterprise worthy of the name. Socialist self-determination implies, among other things, the nurturing of languages and cultures; the decentralization of the means of production; the demystification of bureaucratic organization, and definition, in factory and field, in education and art; the reconstruction of priorities of production; and the dismantling of the stimulated compensatory addictions that are passed off as "consumer demand" in capitalist societies. To assume that the human race is straitjacketed within a capitalist (or bureaucratic socialist) world system, or fated to be so, is to imprison the human potential. No matter how significant and heavy the impact of Western development has been on the rest of the world, it is the selective *response* of other peoples in terms of their histories and traditions which alone holds out hope for them and for us. The relative lack of investment in capital equipment in the Western mold can, for example, be an opportunity, not a handicap. All this has been said before, and it will remain meaningless unless the transformation of Western civilization, which implies the recovery and mastery of our own history, is understood as the dialectical imperative of the creative response of other peoples and cultures.

PART ONE

An Existential Opening

Marxist Anthropology and the Critique of Everyday Life

STEPHEN K. LEVINE

FROM THE CRITIQUE OF POLITICAL ECONOMY TO THE CRITIQUE OF EVERYDAY LIFE

Marxism begins with a critique of political economy. For Marx, this critique has a double sense. On the one hand, it is the critique of a particular form of "knowledge" about reality, a body of concepts and principles which claim to grasp the truth concerning the nature of man's material life. But on the other hand, the critique is directed at this material life itself. By means of a critique of the *science* of political economy, Marx intends to reveal the essential falsity of the *system* of political economy, i.e. capitalism.

Although the critique of political economy is the beginning of Marxism, it is the terminus of Marx's own critical journey. Accepting as a basis the Feuerbachian critique of religion as an inversion of man's essential nature, Marx proceeded to probe the roots of this inversion, locating them, first, by means of a critique of Hegel's political and legal philosophy, in the split between civil society and the state, between man's actual egoistic life and his ideal species-life. But, as Marx was later to remark, "the anatomy of civil society is political economy," and thus a *radical* critique of human alienation required the development of a political-economic critique as well (Marx 1970:20).

In the *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844*, Marx gave a philosophical–anthropological basis for this critique. The central concept of political economy is said to be private property. But, Marx shows, this concept is itself derivative from that of alienated labor. And labor is depicted by Marx as the activity which characterizes the human species. Free and universal productive activity constitutes man's basic nature. Insofar as capitalism alienates man from his productive capacities, it is

therefore inhuman in the precise sense of the word. Thus, since capitalism rests on the existence of private property, the critique of political economy is also an indictment of the capitalist system.

In Marx's later work, his critique is further specified. The concept of surplus-value reveals the ideological character of the "just exchange" which political economy claims for the relation between property owner and laborer. In this way, the particular form of alienation which capitalism takes is shown to be that of exploitation. Through production for exchange, man is not only robbed of the fruits of his labor, but he is hoodwinked into believing that he is getting his just desserts.

Marx's critique has the function of unmasking the phenomenon, of going beyond appearance to the reality which sustains it. At the same time, the critique points to the possibility of overcoming this distortion, not only through theoretical comprehension, but through practical action. The critique of political economy shows that capitalism, by the production of the proletariat — a potential collective subject of history — has created the conditions that encompass the possibility of overcoming capitalism itself. Capitalism has developed man's species-life to its greatest extent, although this development is in an alienated form. If the proletariat can seize power, the realization of human activity in a nonalienated manner could be brought about.

First, however, it must be shown how capitalism itself is produced, and for this Marx has recourse to historical analysis. The seeming "naturalness" of capitalist production relations is exploded by an historical account of the origins of class society. In this account, Marx points to primitive communities as examples of classless society (albeit with a less developed productive relation to nature). If capitalism is an historical product based on division of labor, class oppression, and the rise of the state, then the abolition of capitalism will recreate the primitive communism of earlier societies with the fuller development of man's productive capacities made possible by capitalism itself.

We can speak of Marxism as a critical anthropology in two senses. In the first place, Marx has a conception of man upon which he ultimately bases his critique of social forms. But secondly, the Marxian critique is "anthropological" in the narrower sense: Marx uses certain features of primitive societies in order to criticize his own civilization.

It is important to realize that there is an inner connection between the critique of political economy, Marx's conception of man, and the particular Marxian use of the primitive/civilized dichotomy. Insofar as man is a species-being, a being defined by his free and universal productive activity, the roots of his alienation will have to be found through a critique of political economy, a critique of the self-understanding of his productive life. And the search for the historical development of capitalist productive relations upon which political economy rests will identify primitive

societies primarily in terms of their economic structures, their communal manner of production, and the absence of class and state formation.

Of course, the conception of man as a species-being in the Marxian sense is itself possible only with the development of the mode of alienation which capitalism brings about. Marx himself was quite aware of this. The potentiality of *homo faber* stands revealed only when he has been degraded into *homo economicus*, i.e. when all traditional modes of legitimation have given way to the ideology of equivalence exchange.

Thus, if capitalism were to be substantially modified so that new forms of alienation and domination took shape, we could expect to see — following Marx's example — the emergence of a new kind of critique, grounded upon a new conception of man and implying a new analysis of history and of the primitive. That I believe such a critique has emerged is indicated by the title of this section. We now have to analyze this "critique of everyday life" for its preconditions and for its critical anthropological implications.

It is, of course, impossible to provide an adequate analysis of neocapitalism in a few paragraphs. But for the purposes of the present paper, this complex social process may be presented in simplified form. For convenience, the essential changes will be divided into two analytical categories, each undermining a pillar of classical Marxian criticism.

In the first place, neocapitalism has brought about changes in the concepts of class and class struggle. With the development of productive capacities through the increased application of science and technology, living standards as a whole in capitalist countries have risen. At the same time, through the organization of labor a substantial portion of the working class has been integrated into the economic order. In addition, the rising importance of the "external proletariat" in colonies and former colonies has contributed to the material standards of industrial workers in the metropolis. The importance of the white-collar sector has increased, and the service sector has come to be almost equal with direct production as a source of employment. The state employs an ever larger number of people in its bureaucracies. Finally, "new working classes" of salaried professionals and technicians have assumed an important role in the economy. For these and other reasons, class lines have become blurred and the immediate interest of the proletariat has become identified to a large extent with maintenance of the productive apparatus. This does not mean that the analytical concept of class has become obsolete, as some bourgeois sociologists would maintain, but rather that class *consciousness* is lacking. Much of modern Marxism, and especially the work of the Frankfurt school, has been devoted to the explanation of the factors responsible for the absence of this consciousness.

Secondly, the development of organized capitalism has raised certain

questions about the relation of base to superstructure. In classical political economy, it is evident that the state is nothing but an organ of the ruling class; politics is subordinated to economics. But in advanced capitalist society, state intervention for the maintenance of the system as a whole has transformed the relation between government and business. In addition, the productive capacities of science and technology have brought into doubt the labor theory of value, as well as the mirror conception of the relation between reality and knowledge.

The two developments are obviously related. If the working class no longer has a clear perception of its real interests, this can only be because these interests are not immediately reflected in its experience. False consciousness becomes the central obstacle to socialist revolution.

Given this image of a change in the social and economic system, contemporary Marxists have tried to adapt their critical vocabulary. These attempts have been varied and it is impossible to systematize them at this moment. The only point of agreement is that the critique of political economy is *by itself* inadequate for an analysis of neocapitalism. I stress the words "by itself," since without the material basis to which Marx's early critique refers, contemporary Marxists would be indistinguishable from other critics of "mass society," "post-industrialism," etc. Of course, whether or not these attempts have succeeded in producing integrated theories is itself a matter of dispute.

The supercession of the critique of political economy implies two things: first, that economics is no longer the sole determinant of social and political relationships; second, that political economy is no longer the primary legitimation for oppressive power configurations.

The search for the dominant legitimating ideology has taken several directions. We will confine ourselves to two of the most significant ones. For Wilhelm Reich, the repression of sexuality through patriarchal family organization produced the passive-aggressive "authoritarian" personality incapable of grasping his real sexual-economic interests. For the Frankfurt school, the "dialectic of enlightenment" brought about the hegemony of a technical rationality divorced from human ends. The critique of political economy is thus replaced or supplemented either by a critique of patriarchal ideology or by a critique of the ideology of science and technology. We can provisionally call both of these "critiques of everyday life," in the sense that their analyses extend beyond the point of production and its legitimating ideology to a concern with the totality of experience and the modes of justification which mask the alienated character of that experience. We will come back later to the problem of a more precise definition of the concept of "everyday life."

As was mentioned earlier in this paper, every critique rests upon or implies a conception of human existence. Marx's critique of political economy is tied to the conception of man as species-being, the entity that

produces himself through the collective transformation of nature. In a broad sense, the Reichian critique rests upon the definition of man as a sexual being. For Marx, the sexual and reproductive aspects of human existence are ultimately reducible to the productive forms of man's activity. At most, family structure and relations between the sexes are an index of the humanization of man; they are never its motivating force. To a great extent, this neglect of sexuality is based on Marx's historicism. It seems, however, that sex is irrevocably tied to our existence as natural, not historical beings. It is the great merit of psychoanalysis, and of Reich in particular, to have restored to critical theory the erotic dimension of human life. As we know, however, Reich became more and more one-sided in his stress on sexual liberation and orgastic potency. The implications of this naturalism are revealed in his conception of orgone energy as the cosmic force to which all social structures can be traced. Marxian theory has yet to solve the riddle of the relation between labor and sexual desire in the constitution of humanity. That this is not merely a theoretical problem is illustrated by the problematic relation between the womens' and workers' movements, between feminism and socialism today.

The critical theory of the Frankfurt school, in its attack on technocratic ideology, has led to a philosophical anthropology that differs from the Reichian. This has become particularly apparent in the work of Jurgen Habermas, in many ways a culmination of the whole "line" of Frankfurt Marxism. For Habermas, the domination of science and technology has brought about a restriction of the communicative potentialities of men and women. Instrumental systems of action, predicated on the need for prediction and control, have overcome systems of symbolic interaction, based on the motivation toward increased intersubjective understanding. Technical criteria have supplanted practical ones, as the mass of the population has become depoliticized. Critical theory, therefore, must aim at the restoration of the missing dimension of shared symbolic meanings by encouraging free and open discussion of all relevant practical matters.

Habermas criticizes Marx for absorbing the practical interest into the technical one. In terms of critical anthropology, we may say that he adds to Marx's conception of labor as a fundamental constituent of the human species, the conception of speech as another such constituent. Whether or not Marx did confuse practical and technical "interests," it is clear that he had no independent philosophy of language and did not consider the symbolic dimension as primary in the development of humanity.

The practical relevance of Habermas's conception is clear. Politically speaking, it provided a basis for the student revolt of the 1960's, and more generally it provides for the possibility of a cultural revolution in the advanced industrialized countries. Once again, the fruitfulness of this conception will depend upon its ability to be integrated into a critical

totality furnishing the basis for a broad social movement in which intellectuals, students, and "freaks" join hands with women and workers. If the critique is directed solely at the missing symbolic dimension, and if man is defined in terms of his linguistic capacities alone, the latent idealism of Frankfurt Marxism will render it an inadequate basis for a critical theory of contemporary society.

Just as every mode of criticism implies an image of man, so it also leads to a particular interpretation of history, both its origins and its end. For Marx, history is the history of class struggle, leading to the development of man's productive capacities. Primitive communities are noted for their cooperative economic basis; and the classless society of the future is envisaged as being founded upon the collective organization of production. For Reich, on the other hand, history is the history of sexual repression. The primitive is identified with an era of matriarchal social organization, a period of free sexual expression before the emergence of the patriarchal state. Communism would thus imply a society based on liberated sexuality, with communal child-rearing and socialization practices. As for Habermas, sober rationalist that he is, he has no conception of either primitive communism or the utopia of the future. But the broader cultural movement to which his thinking can be related stresses the symbolic and ritual aspects of primitive communities and points to the formation of an "alternate" culture for the future.

With regard to the use of the primitive in critical theory, certain observations have to be made. In the first place, it is obvious that we are here in the neighborhood of the classic hermeneutic circle. What you see depends upon where you stand. But this does not mean that the aspects seen are illusory. Rather, they become distorted only when they are taken for the whole. This is one point where anthropologists can be of particular service. The relation between economy, family and sexuality, and myth and ritual in primitive culture has to be appropriated on an ethnographic basis. To give just a few examples: Marx and Engels' account of the origin of the state and the stages of human development, Reich's conception of the matriarchy, the counter-cultural disregard of the context of symbolism — all these would have to be discarded without losing sight of the essential correctness of the critical use of anthropological findings, namely that in fact cooperative work relations, strong family and sexual ties, and a rich symbolic life do characterize primitive societies.

From another point of view, an analysis of the relation between economy, family, and religion in primitive society might aid in the integration of dimensions of existence which would be required for developing the philosophical basis of an adequate critical anthropology. For example, it would eliminate any empirical foundation for a reflection theory of consciousness as well as demonstrate the ineradicable necessity of grounding symbols in practical acts.

THE SUBJECT OF EVERYDAY LIFE AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF A CRITICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

In the second section of this paper, I would like to investigate the problem of the "who" of everyday life. If the revolutionary subject has been submerged, then what has risen to take his place, and how can we undertake the necessary salvage job? Critical theory has made several attempts to answer this question; particularly significant is Marcuse's notion of "one-dimensionality." My analysis will benefit from these prior attempts but will not be primarily oriented to them. Rather I shall pursue a line of thought that seems promising but has not yet become part of Marxist theory.

To begin with, if the goal is to liberate the subject from the conditions of his alienation, the starting point must be to analyze critically the justification for this alienation. In other words, where is the ideology of the subject of everyday life to be found?

The answer to this, I suspect, does not lie directly either in political economy or in patriarchal or technocratic consciousness but rather in those portions of contemporary social science that have attempted to grasp the individual in the context of his society, namely sociology and social psychology. This kind of social science has become dominant not only in the teaching of the academies but also in the practice of governmental and other bureaucracies and in the consciousness of the population at large. One has only to point, for example, to the social significance of the theory of deviancy.

In the social scientific approach to the understanding of the person, three major categories are utilized. The first is that of identity. Every individual is said to possess an identity by means of which he recognizes himself and others recognize him as one and the same person. Identity bridges completed past acts and projected future ones. The *I* who has acted in a certain way is the same as the *I* who will act in a similar or different manner. Moreover, identity bridges the gap between self and other. You see me, and I know myself to be the one whom you see. Of course, identity can become problematic, and we will look at a description of that condition shortly; but the above seems to be the model in terms of which deformations of identity are to be understood. Every normal person is conceived as having an identity of the sort described; identity, that is, is normative for members of society. To have an identity problem is to be abnormal, a condition which requires therapeutic measures of some sort.

If society is composed of individuals with identities, where do these identities come from, how are they generated? The answer to this provides us with the second major category of contemporary social science: social role. The significance of this concept is so great that Dahrendorf

has even tried to demonstrate that all other sociological concepts can be derived from it. He states that "the proposition that implicitly or explicitly underlies all research and theoretical work in modern sociology is: *Man behaves in accordance with his roles*," and goes on to say that

> man basically figures in sociological analyses only to the extent that he complies with all the expectations associated with his social positions. This abstraction, the scientific unit of sociology, may be called *homo sociologicus* (Dahrendorf 1968:90–91).

Identity, then, is generated through the playing of roles. As a member of a social whole, I am given certain "parts" to play. My identity is nothing in itself; rather it consists of the configuration formed by the totality of these parts. Insofar as I act in accordance with my position in the social order, I acquire a recognizable identity for myself and others. My identity becomes problematic only when my roles are in conflict. If I were required to be ascetic at work, for example, and hedonistic in my free time, I would have difficulty in knowing which of these I "really" was.

In order that these roles cohere, "make sense," they have to be integrated into a significant totality, a world. This world is the one I live in every day; any other "world" (e.g. of dreams) is ultimately derivable from the world of everyday life. Here we have what seems to be the third foundational category of contemporary social science: the world of everyday life is the place within which persons with identities act out their social roles. Or to put it another way, the "I" is the player of social roles in an everyday-life world.

If the world of everyday life is contradictory or disharmonious, the roles which are located in this world will conflict and the formation of the I will become problematic. Thus, for social science, the problem of identity is ultimately comprehended within the problem of meaning. In other words, it is a problem of anomie. Insofar as incoherence of the whole is the result of increasing institutional differentiation and complexity, there is no solution envisaged. At best, pessimism for the future is combined with pride in the rationalization of institutional arrangements and what seem to be the increased possibilities of choice.

The process by which identities are generated in the course of a life is known as "socialization." In the socialization process, social norms are "internalized" by the person, i.e. literally taken into him from the outside. To be inadequately socialized is to deviate from the norm, to become a "deviant."

Perhaps it is just as well to note that this model has "left-wing" as well as "right-wing" possibilities. For example, Goffman's analysis of the mental patient as the embodiment of a particular *deviant* role suggests that what has been taken to be a form of sickness is better understood as a

social product. The mental hospital stands revealed as a "producer" of insanity and loses its sacrosanct character as a medical setting.

The point, however, is not to condemn social science as conservative or praise it as liberal but rather to analyze it critically, i.e. to examine its preconditions and implications. Here the crucial test is its relationship to reality. To refer back to Marx, political economy is false not because it is a reactionary lie but just because it is in fact "true," i.e. corresponds to a reality that is itself false.

The same can be said for contemporary social science. Role theory is true because in our everyday lives we tend to have significance only insofar as we act in accordance with the positions we occupy or expect to occupy in the future. Of course, we *can* act differently, but such behavior makes no sense; it is nonsense or craziness, which becomes comprehensible only insofar as we adopt the role of an insane person. To put it another way, for social science deviance is the basis of a viable identity but rebellion is not (unless it can be reduced to deviance, cf. the various analyses of the student opposition in the sixties).

Having said this much, let me hasten to qualify it. Social science is no more a literal transcription of social interaction today than political economy was a literal transcription of economic action in Marx's time. There are gaps as well as survivals. My point is that social scientific reflection upon society is truly a reflection *of* society; it corresponds to the dominant structure and tendency of our epoch. *Homo economicus* is being replaced by *Homo sociologicus.*

The basis for this change can itself by partially comprehended in terms of a political-economic analysis of the transition to neocapitalism. As the individual entrepreneur in the period of capital accumulation gives way to the corporate employee in a period of capital stabilization, the autonomous ego of the inner-directed man is shattered into a fragmented sense of selfhood dependent upon recognition by others.

"The I is another" — this was Baudelaire's insight already in the nineteenth century. It is a description of the loss of the subject on the psychological level that corresponds to the loss of the revolutionary subject that was observed on the political level. If in fact I achieve my sense of self primarily through the internalization of social norms by means of which I make myself ready to occupy certain social positions that are already established, from where could I draw the inner strength necessary to contest these norms and create a new "world"? The revolutionary is replaced by the functionary, as the guide for conscience becomes the following of orders.

If it is true that every affirmation is a negation, one should not be surprised to see every ideology call forth its own particular critique. Nor, following Hegel, should we be surprised at the particularly one-sided

character of that critique, depending as it does on the very structure it opposes. The only curious thing in this case is that the critique of social scientific ideology preceded the full development of that ideology itself. Nor was this critique directed primarily at a scientific conception but rather at the level of prescientific awareness.

The explanation for this lies in the ambiguous character of "ideology" — a term which refers equally to scientific legitimation and to ordinary consciousness. For example, technocratic ideology is displayed equally in behaviorist models of human action and in the pervasive feeling that political problems are too complex for any but the experts to handle. Similarly, the ideological conception of the subject of everyday life is to be found both in the abstractions of social science and in the consciousness of that subject himself.

The topic is complex, since the concept of everyday life has itself been used in a critical manner by phenomenologists and phenomenological sociologists. In Husserl's later work, the lifeworld (*Lebenswelt*) or world of everyday life is grasped as the basis of scientific generalization and formalization. The contemporary crisis of the sciences, involving the destiny of Western man as a rational being, is located in the lack of foundation for science in everyday life. The critical task of philosophy is therefore to relocate scientific knowledge on the basis of the commonsense world and to reject all conceptions of that world which are themselves based on concepts that are derived from it.

Phenomenology opts for "experience" over "knowledge," except insofar as it strives to be a knowledge of experience. The question then arises, is our everyday experience a sufficient ground? Does it stand by itself or is it also derivable from something else? Although some "radical" interpreters of Husserl might deny this, it seems clear that for him, the *Lebenswelt* is not itself an adequate foundation but rather depends on transcendental subjectivity for its very sense. In fact, the analysis of the *Lebenswelt* is even described as one of the "ways" to a transcendental phenomenology, an eidetic description of the extramundane status of the absolute Subject.

By and large, phenomenology since Husserl has rejected the notion of a nonworldly subject. This has, however, left Husserl's followers in a dilemma. If transcendental subjectivity cannot serve as a basis for the everyday-life world, either that world is itself its own basis or else there is *within* experience some nonimmediate foundation *for* experience.

Phenomenological social science has tended to take the former alternative. Following Schutz, phenomenological sociologists, symbolic interactionists, and ethnomethodologists have given precedence to the commonsense world as the foundation for all theorizing. Retaining the critique of knowledge intrinsic to phenomenology, this has enabled them to joust with the behaviorists while at the same time contributing to the

social scientific image of man in terms of what we would call the ideology of everyday life. For if everyday life is taken as its own ground, then there can be no appeal beyond commonsense experience, i.e. the very experience that critical theory has described as alienated and incapable of grasping its own true nature.

The other alternative to the dilemma was shown by Heidegger and developed most recently by R. D. Laing. In *Being and time*, Heidegger undertakes an analysis of everyday *Dasein* [existence], what I would term a phenomenology of everyday life. In this analysis, he shows that the "who" that we experience ourselves to be is first of all not who we really are. Rather, it is the "they" (*Das Man*), the anonymous and ubiquitous other than guides our acts and thoughts. In other words, everyday *Dasein* is not himself; he is the other.

In Heidegger's description of the they-self, we find an anticipation of the social scientific image of the subject of everyday life whose identity is a reflection of the anonymous and typical roles which he enacts. Therefore, we feel that we are entitled to take Heidegger's critique of the they-self as an anticipatory critique of this image as well.

It is important to note that this critique is phenomenological, not metaphysical or moral. Heidegger does not appeal to a transcendent entity or norm in his criticism. Rather his argument remains within the phenomenological sphere, although in order to achieve this, he must interpret phenomenology in a novel manner. He does this by viewing phenomenology as a way to let that which shows itself show itself in itself. In other words, what is immediately experienced may not be the *true* phenomenon, it may in fact be a covering up of the latter which stands in need of being revealed. Phenomenology thus becomes a hermeneutic, an act of uncovering a meaning which appears as the ground of its own distortion.

In this case, the they-self must contain a path to the very thing it obscures: man's authentic existence. The gate through which we must pass to traverse this path is found in the fundamental mood of anguish or dread (*Angst*). As distinguished from fear, which has a recognizable object, dread is experienced as objectless, as dread of nothing. In fact, it is the Nothing itself I dread and most of all the possibility of my entering into it. Dread reveals to me that I am a being-towards-death, that I contain death within me as my utmost possibility. In doing so, it forces me to face my self, since no other can die for me. Thus, dread individualizes; it reveals me as a being dependent upon nothingness for my very existence. In so doing, it takes away the possibility of interpreting myself as part of the they, the anonymous subject of the everyday. The possibility of becoming myself, then, depends upon my capacity to anticipate my death resolutely, to grasp myself as a being-towards-death and to give up the easy refuge of everyday existence.

Furthermore, this everyday they-self is revealed as a refuge through my authentic self-reflection. The phenomenological critique of the everyday depends upon the existential choice of myself as a mortal man. By means of this choice, I can now *see* the they-self as a flight from mortality. Everyday existence, far from being sufficient units itself, stands revealed as an attempt to cover up the essential finitude of human life, its rootedness in the Void.

For R. D. Laing, this existential critique is combined with a critique of the psychiatric model of insanity. Normality is seen as a form of alienated experience. Those whose experience conflicts with the norms of everyday life are often forced to construct a false-self system which they present to others, reserving their "true" self for an interior fantasy world. If the repression is great enough, they may find themselves "split," at the mercy of this compensatory fantasy self for a definition of reality. Under such circumstances, their behavior becomes abnormal, and they may find themselves permanently invalidated by others, classified as "insane," and confined to a special institution.

But this very breakdown, Laing feels, can also be an opportunity. For by giving up the false, alienated self of the everyday, one may have the chance to confront the very roots of existence in the acosmic Void, an experience which mystics of all generations have known. Everyday life, for Laing is thus based upon fear of the Void. The destruction of the self of the everyday is a precondition for authentic existence. This shows how close Laing is to Heidegger.

A particularly interesting aspect of Laing's work is his acceptance of social scientific studies of identity formation and especially of the familial context of selfhood. All that is necessary for the critique to be set into operation is to counterbalance these studies by the concept of experience and an analysis of its repression. Thus, it should be clear that the existential critique of everyday life is tied, by opposition, to the ideological conception of everyday life maintained by social science.

If we examine the three major components of that conception (identity, social role, and everyday life) and look for their existential counterparts, the connection will become evident. First, the concept of identity as the internalization of social roles in everyday life is replaced by the concept of individuation achieved by rejection of the otherness of the everyday. The social self is seen as inauthentic, an institutionalization of the inhuman, based upon repression and enforced by penalties. Second, social roles are grasped as empty rituals whose real function is to conform alienated experience. Role behavior is rejected in favor of existential choice, an act of individual decision based on a confrontation with the ground of one's existence in nothingness. Finally, the very concept of everyday life is itself rejected in favor of transcendence. Only by a

deliberate alienation from everyday life can authentic existence be achieved.

For the existential critique, of course, it is not just a question of replacing concepts but of deriving them, grounding them (just as Marx derived capital as dead labor from the living labor of the proletariat). Thus, the inauthentic self of the everyday-life world is comprehensible only in terms of the authentic transcendence from which it flees. The important point, however, is the way in which the two positions form a whole by opposition. They are in fact the very mirror images of each other. To put it another way, the existential critique in its current form is bound to the very structures of alienation which it opposes. If the social scientific image of man is an expression of neocapitalist social formation, then the existential critique of everyday life is similarly tied up with that particular mode of social life and cannot be incorporated into a critical anthropology without revision.

This brings me to the problem of the relation between existentialism and Marxism. In terms of the present framework of analysis, the question can be formulated thus: in what way can the existential conception of man as authentic existence be related to the Marxist notion of man as species-being? We are thinking here at the level of philosophical anthropology, the fundamental basis for any fully developed critical anthropology. In order to assess the relation between Marxism and existentialism, it is necessary not just to contrast the critique of political economy with the critique of everyday life, but to probe the foundations on which these critiques rest.

Having said this, it is nevertheless not so evident that there is any real possibility of relating these two basic conceptions of human nature. Does not Marx's concept refer to *social* man, that member of the human species who realizes himself through the collective transformation and appropriation of nature? And does not the existential conception refer to the solitary *individual* who achieves selfhood through the rejection of the crowd in the confrontation of his own finitude? On the surface, these two conceptions seem radically opposed, and most commentators have been content to leave it at that. But if we are to apply the understanding which Marx himself has given us, then perhaps the opposition will be revealed in a complementary rather than contradictory form.

That is, it is necessary to grasp these notions in their social and historical context in order to see what is adventitious and what intrinsic to them. To begin with Marx, it is clear that his emphasis on the social nature of the individual is in part a counter to the individualism which he perceived to underlie the new form of bourgeois society. Production for exchange had radically transformed corporate and familial structures, producing the isolated atom, acting in his own self-interest, that is, economic man.

Marx's presentation of his concept of socialism is tinged by a necessary opposition to the individualism of bourgeois society. Of course, this does not mean that man is not a social individual, only that, for historical reasons, his individuality as such is not in the forefront of Marx's thought.

In the same way, the existential conception of the individual is marked by its context of origination. Mass society, implying a radical abolition of the possibilities for autonomy, is that social whole against which the existing individual chooses himself. It is no accident that existentialism, though anticipated earlier (and in some ways a universal phenomenon), becomes culturally viable for a general public only with the development of neocapitalist social organization; for it is the very massification brought on by this society that serves as its starting point.

It seems clear that the opposition between the Marxist and the existential conceptions of man is in part due to their origination in different social epochs, the former in the period of entrepreneurial capitalism with its transformation of the corporate feudal order into atomistic civil society, the latter in the period of organized capitalism, with its erection of new corporate structures and consequent abolition of individuality. Nevertheless, the opposition remains. In order to overcome it, we will have to reaffirm both the primacy and the incompleteness of classical Marxism. That is, labor *is* the fundamental characteristic of human existence; it is that which creates the preconditions of daily life, but it does not form the totality of that life. At the same time, as man is a socially productive individual, a member of the species, he is also for himself an existing individual, mortal, and condemned to the comprehension of his mortality. The two analyses do not conflict; they are on different levels. But the levels are not equivalent. First and foremost my existence is a product of the social conditions of the transformation of nature in terms of which I live; only on the basis of this am I free to grasp myself in my solitude and come face to face with the anguish of my possible nothingness. To eliminate the first level would be to restrict myself to a petit bourgeois consciousness which wishes to remain ignorant of the real conditions of the possibility of its self-reflection. But to eliminate the second level is to run the risk of a socialism without a human face, the dogmatism of party functionaries.

If this interpretation of the relation between the Marxist and existential philosophical anthropologies is correct, then perhaps it can serve as a guide for comprehending their respective critiques. That is, the critique of political economy must always be considered as fundamental, not because the ideology of just exchange remains the fundamental legitimation for structures of domination, but because the sphere of the material production of life is primary and conditions all other domains. Thus, the critique of everyday life has to be incorporated in, or at least developed upon the basis of, the critique of political economy. To develop the

former in its own terms would be to be content with a purely "cultural" criticism which does not go to the roots of the problem in material existence; to develop the latter alone would be to ignore the crucial question of the formation of revolutionary consciousness. What is necessary is a unified conception of man in terms of which critical theory can comprehend the totality of the current social system.

As I have indicated, the full development of a critical anthropology implies a historical as well as a philosophical basis. Of particular interest at this point is the direction a unified conception of man would give to an interpretation of primitive society. Of course, such a conception would have to include the erotic and communicative aspects of human behavior that were mentioned earlier, as well as the productive and the "existential" aspects. Such a unified conception has not yet been worked out. In addition, it would have to take into account aspects of human existence that we have refrained from mentioning, especially the aesthetic and the cognitive.

It might be of value, however, if I could give some preliminary indication of such an interpretation, stressing the interrelationship of the various aspects in order to illustrate the potentialities for philosophical unification that lie in historical analysis. To put it simply, how many of the oppositions that we find in conceptions of human nature and in that nature itself are results of the fragmentation of man in class society? We take it for granted that we are looking at opposing conceptions of man, but might it not be that we are looking at reified aspects of the human which are taken as totalities?

If we consider, for example, rituals of initiation in primitive societies, perhaps we can see the interrelationship of some of these aspects. In the first place, as is well known, primitive communities operate upon a cooperative economic basis. To take one's place in the productive process is to become a member of the tribe, one who contributes to and is benefited by the collective labor of the group. Thus, initiation often includes instruction in technical skills, and even when this is absent, initiation still confirms the productive character of adulthood in that social group. In any event, the initiate, once confirmed, is expected to take up his economic function without any longer being compensated for his youth and relative incapacity.

At the same time, as is only appropriate for a ceremony occurring somewhere near biological puberty, initiation has a deep sexual significance. One becomes a man or a woman in the sexual sense, capable of serious erotic attachment and, importantly for a kin-based society, able to marry and beget children.

Thirdly, initiation is often an introduction to the full meaning of the ritual tradition of the group. Symbols are explained, some for the first

time. A special language may be used to emphasize the special status of the rite. In addition, the future economic and sexual position of the person may be justified in terms of the mythic tradition which all comprehend and share.

Finally, initiation, as a rite of passage, involves a temporary separation and seclusion from the community. In this separation, the individual may undergo trials of courage; he may fast, stay awake for prolonged periods, and sometimes seek a special vision of his future destiny. Initiation is a ritual death and rebirth, and the solitude and suffering of the separation period is an opportunity for the initiate to come to terms with the ground of his existence.

This interpretation is an attempt to sketch how in primitive society labor, sexuality, speech, and existence can be seen as integrated in the ritual of initiation, a collective celebration of identity formation and the individuation process at a critical point in the life cycle of the individual. If we relate this analysis to our earlier discussion of the categories of social science and of the critique of everyday life, we can perhaps see how some of the oppositions that underlie those two perspectives can be transcended.

In the first place, identity and individuation are no longer at odds. In the initiation ritual I become a member of the group and gain a social self precisely through withdrawal from the group, in the encounter with my solitude. This is possible since it is the community which prepares me for my isolation and which welcomes me back. Secondly, I do not oppose my authenticity to the demands the social order places upon me by virtue of the position I occupy. Rather, initiation teaches me how I can reconcile my economic and erotic functions with a radical sense of my autonomy. Finally, I do not have to choose between the everyday and transcendence. Everydayness is the background for the ritual which takes me "out of this world." I leave the everyday precisely in order to come back to it. But this everyday is now under the aspect of transcendence. It is no one-dimensional surface, but a container for hidden depths; it is pregnant with meanings shared by me with others in mutual recognition.

Thus, in primitive society the antagonistic totality which underlies the opposition between bourgeois social science and existential criticism is reflected as a harmonious whole. At the same time, the opposition between the existential individual and the Marxist social man can be seen to find one mode of mediation. It is the productive communalism, "primitive communism" if you will, that sets the stage for a drama of individual mortality and change. The everyday material life of the group is both fulfilled and revitalized by the ritual transformation of the person. If our interpretation of initiation has any validity, it should confirm that the antagonism between labor and existence is itself a social product and not an existential necessity. Only when we divide classes of men into those

capable of productive work and those capable of self-reflection is there a basis for this antagonism.

Of course, the mediation between the two will take a wholly different form in a classless society based on the full development of the productive forces. An interpretation of the primitive should take us forward into the realization of our possibilities, not back to the repetition of a past actuality.

This interpretation is only a sketch of what needs to be done. It seems to me that two complementary tasks depend upon the formation of an adequate critical anthropology. In the first place, the "levels" of human existence must be clarified in themselves and in their interrelationships. We need to know not only *that* labor is primary, but *how* it is primary, how it influences the other levels and how these, in turn, react upon it. A Marxist philosophical anthropology has to be developed that will do justice to the whole man, not just to the fragmented selves of our acquaintance and self-knowledge.

At the same time, this unified image of man must be used as a guiding idea in the interpretation of historical development and the possibilities for change. In what way can history be understood through such a conception? Will this attempt to comprehend the historical process force us to modify our philosophical anthropological standpoint? Will our vision of the classless society of the future provide a meeting place for the convergence of the philosophical and the historical? To what extent has this convergence been anticipated in primitive culture, and to what extent is this anticipation realizable in terms of rational forms of social order and a transformed relationship to nature? How can the philosophical and historical aspects of critical anthropology be used to comprehend the present relation between political economy and everyday life?

The critique of political economy will always be the "beginning" for Marxists, in the sense that it is the origin of our thought. The crucial question now, I believe, is, can we rest content with that beginning, or is it necessary to continue in new directions in order to arrive at a clearer image of our situation and the possibilities for our liberation?

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From Discourse to Silence: The Structuralist Impasse[1]

BOB SCHOLTE

> "To all those who still wish to talk about man, about his reign or his liberation, to all those who still ask themselves questions about what man is in his essence, to all those who wish to take him as their starting-point in their attempts to reach the truth, to all those who, on the other hand, refer all knowledge back to the truths of man himself, to all those who refuse to formalize without anthropologizing, who refuse to mythologize without demystifying, who refuse to think without immediately thinking that it is man who is thinking, to all these warped and twisted forms of reflection we can answer only with a philosophical laugh — which means, to a certain extent, a silent one."
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> (FOUCAULT 1970:342–343)

Why should Foucault oppose all manifestations of humanism with a partly silent philosophic laughter? Because for him, as for most structuralists,[2] men and women — as consciously reflecting, historically situated, intentionally speaking subjects — have ceased to exist. Instead, "it" is said to reign supreme; "it" being that rather ill-defined,[3] unconscious, synchronic, and determining essence which thinks, explains, and bespeaks the human condition.

This raises a paramount question: How is this determining essence thought? That is, how can consciousness discover that "what is *other than itself*" (Althusser 1970:143)? If "I think where I am not [and] hence . . .

[1] This essay draws upon and further elaborates previously published materials (see especially Scholte 1973a).

[2] Structuralism is by no means a monolithic movement. Nevertheless, structuralists all share a common antihumanism and a pervasive antihistoricism. Any distinctions between them can only be made within the confines of this shared framework.

[3] Structuralists invariably invoke the unconscious as an explanatory principle, but they rarely if ever define its exact nature of function. Instead, the reader is referred to Marxism, psychoanalysis, or linguistics — the disciplines which are said to have discovered and defined the unconscious. The entire corpus of Lévi-Strauss's writings, for instance, contains only one definitive characterization of the unconscious mind (see Lévi-Strauss 1969c:84).

am where I do not think" (Lacan 1957:70),[4] how am I, as a situated consciousness, to think that essential Being that thinks me from a place where "it," not I, am at?

The structuralist answer: conscious thought can think its own unconscious determination on condition that it become scientific, i.e. instigates a "radical break with lived reality" (Sebag 1964:228). Such a discontinuity (see also Lévi-Strauss 1967b:61–62) will enable the "dégagé" scientist to think a more fundamental and encompassing continuity: that between the categories of thought and the elements of the real (see Glucksmann 1967:1569). Lévi-Strauss explains:

> What has been called "the progress of consciousness in philosophy and in history" corresponds to [a] process of interiorization of a rationality which is preexistent in two forms: the one immanent in the universe, without which thought could not succeed in catching up with things and no science would be possible; and, included in this universe, an objective thought which functions in an autonomous and rational manner . . . (Lévi-Strauss 1971:614).

Acquiring knowledge, in other words, consists of explaining a preexistent (and unconscious) rationality by means of this same rationality's autonomous (and conscious) correlate: scientific objectivity.

I would like to discuss the concrete implications of this structuralist epistemology in the specific context of Lévi-Strauss's anthropology and in terms of three interrelated issues: the status of history and historical explanation; the place of language and linguistic method; and the problematic result of structuralist praxis itself.[5] The crucial problems revolve around questions such as these: if, on the one hand, thought and reality are continuous because both are in the final analysis reducible to an unconscious infrastructure, why is scientific activity nonetheless considered discontinuous and hence irreducible? Is not a critical relation between existential experience and scientific conceptualization, including an attentiveness to both historical mediation and language praxis, a precondition for the anthropological perspective?

What if, on the other hand, scientific rationality is itself a part of the universal continuity postulated by Lévi-Strauss (as he himself maintains in the quotation cited above)? What would science's relation to the unconscious be? Would the infrastructural unconscious simply be an explanatory reality posited by scientific consciousness (see Dumasy 1972:72)? Or could the continuity be more profound and thus affect the very definition of structuralist praxis? If the latter, Foucault's partly silent

[4] Unless otherwise noted, all translations from bibliographic items listed in their original languages are my own.

[5] I am not concerned with pursuing the critique of structural anthropology as a form of Hegelianism (a frequent Anglo-American preoccupation) or a "Kantianism without transcendental subject" (see Ricoeur 1963a). The latter is favored in France and is acceptable to Lévi-Strauss (Lévi-Strauss 1969b:19).

philosophic laughter must be interpreted in a way he did not intend: as a disquieting symptom of a reductionist impasse inherent in structural analysis.

To anticipate my conclusion: as an explicit product of conscious thought, scientific discourse can only stand in a metaphorical, not metonymical, relation to that silent and unconscious Being which is its privileged subject-matter and to which, in principle, it too is reducible. The integration between form and essence, method and reality, to which structuralist discourse explicitly aspires (see Lévi-Strauss 1966b:91) would paradoxically reach its "logical" fulfillment in the inexplicable domain of unconscious silence.

Given this impasse (which will be detailed in the course of this essay), structural anthropology cannot provide an adequate paradigm for the human sciences. At the same time, a critical discussion of the major issues that lead to the structuralist impasse does provide an alternative possibility: a reflexive, dialectical, and humanistic anthropology which is in large measure indebted to Lévi-Strauss's philosophical adversary — Jean-Paul Sartre — and which traces its historical roots to a Marxist tradition which structuralists like Althusser have sought to reread out of existence.

Let me begin with a topic which may not appear immediately relevant: history and historical explanation. Like most structuralists, Lévi-Strauss is decidedly antihistoricist.[6] Many of his writings contain sustained and often telling criticisms of a typical Judeo-Christian (and Hegelian-Marxist [see Lowith 1962]) illusion: the *soi-disant* "historico-transcendental destiny of the Occident" (Foucault cited by Leclerc 1972:9). This ethnocentric point of view has invariably and arbitrarily privileged Western historical experience. It has persistently tried to show that some kind of progressively cumulative and historically totalizing consciousness or purpose inheres in, or is revealed by, the relatively homogeneous and continuous time-span of Occidental civilizations. Oriental and Third World cultures (the latter a revealing term in its own right!) have either been totally neglected or simply judged of minor importance compared to Western activities.

From an ethnological standpoint, we have no right to make our own local temporal scale the measuring rod of historical significance (see Gaboriau 1963:157ff). Such action would reflect a pedestrian insensitivity to the prodigious wealth and enormous diversity of human customs so richly documented in the ethnographic literature (see Lévi-Strauss

[6] There are subtle variations on this common antihistoricist theme even among structuralists. For example, Lévi-Strauss seems to be less animate on this topic than either Althusser or Foucault (a difference duly noted by Althusser himself [see Althusser and Balibar 1970:96]). These intradoctrinal distinctions, important though they are, will not be considered in this essay.

1966b:249). Still worse, it would also reflect an ethnocentric arrogance so typical of egocentric and "cumulative" civilizations (mostly our own) who willfully co-opt or ruthlessly coerce "stationary" societies into their own historicist mythologies and imperialistic stratagems.

Lévi-Strauss's antihistoricism is guided by a normative commitment. He seems to favor "ahistorical" or primitive societies — those exhibiting "an obstinate fidelity to the past conceived as a timeless model" (Lévi-Strauss 1966b:236). At the same time, Lévi-Strauss negates this sentiment by his conviction that only the Western consciousness is capable of sustained scientific-structural analysis. Though these cultures are admittedly "borne along on the flux of time," they always seek "to steer a course between the contingencies of history and the immutability of design and remain, as it were, within the stream of intelligibility. They are always at a safe distance from the Scylla and Charybdis of diachrony and synchrony, event and structure, the aesthetic and the logical . . ." (Lévi-Strauss 1966b:73–74).[7]

Surely this effort is not always successful. Even a passionate desire for timeless harmonies must of necessity confront the pervasive "antithesis between history and systems of classifications" (Lévi-Strauss 1966b:232). In fact, history may, at times, "emerge victorious," and thus upset "the plans of the wise" (Lévi-Strauss 1966b: 155). Nevertheless, the ideal and the quest are for a timeless past and an eternal present. Certainly "in theory, if not in practice, history is subordinated to system" (Lévi-Strauss 1966b:233).

Since "the characteristic feature of the savage mind is its timelessness, [because] its object is to grasp the world as both synchronic and diachronic totality . . ." (Lévi-Strauss 1966b:263), primitive peoples have created a more "authentic" life-style than peoples obsessed with historical progress (see Lévi-Strauss 1963b). The so-called progressive outlook has not only fostered the exploitation and colonization of "lesser" cultures and territories, it actually threatens the very existence of Western societies themselves. In our specific case, "ninety percent of the progress we make serves to counterbalance the disastrous effects of the remaining ten percent" (Lévi-Strauss in Dreyfus 1970:237). In this context, Western civilizations are more akin to over-heated steam engines than to smoothly efficient "motors" of progressive history. In all probability (and provided the energy supply lasts), Occidental civilizations will continue to generate the enormous waste characteristic of enthropic technocracies.

Primitive societies are like pendulum clocks in comparison. They have generally sustained a measured ecology and a telic balance with nature. Their "mythic" concepts of reversible time and cyclical change have

[7] Mythology provides an especially dramatic example. Like music, myths "are instruments for the obliteration of time" (Lévi-Strauss 1969b:16; see again below).

tended to preserve ideological symmetries and social equilibria. Their social structures have on the whole been harmonic and democratic (see Lévi-Strauss 1969a:21ff). In fact, more so than any other life-style, a primitive culture may still exhibit that "crystaline structure" which corresponds to a "permanent hope for mankind" (Lévi-Strauss 1967a:49). Anthropology's mission is to preserve these societies from the "cannibal instincts of the historical process" and to recall, whenever possible, "the ring of bygone harmonies" (Lévi-Strauss 1963b:117; see also Lévi-Strauss 1967b:43).

Lévi-Strauss's antihistoricism is not merely normative, it is epistemological as well. The two are complementary: his methodological critique of historical explanation echoes his previous critique of historical consciousness and intentionality. The historian "chooses" a chronological explanation in the same way that he or she "wills" a specific understanding of history, that is, as a function of codal or chrono-*logical* decisions (see Lévi-Strauss 1966b:258ff). As a result, historical explanations can never hope to deal with actual successions of events, only with "families of events, each one considered in its structure, its internal composition, its totality" (Lévi-Strauss 1955: 1196).

Lévi-Strauss's contention that in chronological studies the logic preceeds (makes possible and renders intelligible) the chrono announces an important structuralist axiom: diachronic information is dependent on, and secondary to, the synchronic. According to Lévi-Strauss, "it is impossible to discuss an object, to reconstruct its coming into being, without knowing first *what it is*; in other words, without having exhausted the inventory of its internal determinants" (Lévi-Strauss 1967a:11; see also Lévi-Strauss 1971:561 or Sebag 1964:83ff). Similarly, Godelier argues that "the study of the genesis of a structure can only be done if 'guided' by a prior knowledge of that structure" (Godelier 1970:839). Or again, ". . . the problems of diachrony, too, must be thought within the problematic of a theoretical 'synchrony'" (Althusser and Balibar 1970:307).[8]

If the understanding of historical events is the result of predetermined (though often implicit) theoretical, logical, and synchronic decisions, historical consciousness can no longer be considered the "object of an apodictic experience" (Lévi-Strauss 1966b:256). Instead, it is derivative. Historicism has falsely reified temporal consciousness, adding to it an elaborate mythology about progress and totalization. But no more than

[8] Such quotes could be multiplied ad infinitum. Let me add just one other revealing remark about this structural process of "dechronologizing" (Ricoeur 1970:192): "Instead of the structures of history depending on those of time, it is the structures of temporality which depend on those of history. The structures of temporality and their specific differences are *produced in the process of constitution of the concept of history*, as so many necessary determinations of its object" (Althusser and Balibar 1970:297). In other words, temporality is the thought product of a theoretical concept of history.

any other chrono-*logic*, historicism's "truth" "consists wholly in its method" (Lévi-Strauss 1966b: 262).

If we really want to go beyond or beneath the obviousness of phenomenal events, we require a totally different strategy. In the specific domain of historical studies, we need a structural method — one which divides chronological continuities into discontinuous periodizations (like Foucault's thresholds, ruptures, breaks, mutations, etc. [see Foucault 1966 and 1969]). Such a procedure would allow the practicing historian to study a period's or a culture's hidden configurations, internal structures, and systematic transformations. History as such (a hypothetical construct in any event) would become intelligible as an aspect of structure (see Greimas 1966: 823), i.e. as "the inaudible and illegible notation of the effects of a structure of structures" (Althusser and Balibar 1970:17).[9]

Historical events, then, in the structuralist lexicon, are epiphenomenal; they derive their substantive, normative, and epistemological import from preexisting and/or posited synchronic structures. What are these structures? How do they operate? Are they anchored in reality? If so, what kind of reality? Lévi-Strauss answers as follows (this is, of course, a much abbreviated version):[10] there are several levels of structure, but in the final analysis, they are all reducible to the one rational structure immanent in the universe (see Lévi-Strauss's remarks [1971:614] previously cited).

In the human sciences, this rational structure takes the substantive form of a neurophysiological mechanism embedded in the human mind. This neuro-logic operates according to cybernetic principles, most notably those of digital logic. The latter principles constitute the functional definition of the unconscious. The unconscious brain, in turn, is an

[9] Lévi-Strauss's diverse statements about history are not always as unequivocally negative as my summary outline might indicate. Still, even his "positive" remarks rarely carry genuine conviction. Rather, they resemble grudging concessions (see Parain 1967:41). Not surprisingly, even some of Lévi-Strauss's staunchest defenders are uncertain about the viability and exact nature of his attitude toward history. Take, for example, Jean-Marie Benoist. His passion and commitment are evident in his summary of the debate: "Diachrony versus synchrony has become the battle-cry and haven for an entire half-pay crew of the personalist ship, of all foot-loose humanist revolutionaries, of all out-moded phenomenologists determined to preserve the subject as agent of history, of all wavering metaphysicians still awaiting their *cogito*" (Benoist 1973:217). He then praises Lévi-Strauss for having once and for all overthrown "the one-dimensional sovereignty of sense and diachrony." At the same time, he is forced to admit that this judgment may "have carried him . . . to restoring a philosophy of Presentness or Hereness, of exaggerating the idea of the eternally present." He is thus compelled to join one of his "foot-loose humanist revolutionaries" (Lefebvre) in defining structuralism as "Parmenidian"! (Benoist 1973:217–218, 220).

[10] These questions are extremely difficult to answer in Althusser's and Foucault's cases; less so in Lacan's and Lévi-Strauss's. With Althusser, they are "theoretically" resolved in the context of scientific production. With Foucault, one must eventually resort to some sort of belief in the mystery of immaculate conception (see Garaudy 1967:118). Both Lacan and Lévi-Strauss seem to have a more exacting understanding of the role of the unconscious in this regard (for Lacan, see Wilden 1968; for Lévi-Strauss, see Simonis 1968a).

integral part of the physiochemical conditions of human life itself (see Lévi-Strauss 1966b:247ff).

Historical events and their meanings can only be understood in the light of this rational, universal, and synchronic closure. Historical reality, in fact, is the concrete result of a transformational logic generated by the structure of the unconscious. In this sense, for example, "economic history is, by and large, the history of unconscious processes" (Lévi-Strauss 1963b:23).[11] To put the same thing in yet another way: historical events primarily serve to give to thought a content with which (or about which) to think (see Godelier 1973:385). Historical reality thereby makes it possible for anthropological science to "abstract the structure which underlies [history's] many manifestations and [which] remains permanent throughout a succession of events" (Lévi-Strauss 1963b:21). Structural analysis is thus able to show how, in Goethe's words, "all forms are similar, and none are the same, so that their chorus points the way to a hidden law" (Goethe cited by Lévi-Strauss 1967a:31).

Lévi Strauss's reductive rationalism raises the kinds of questions noted at the beginning of this paper: what is the epistemological status of the scientific methods designed to point the way to the unconscious? Are they not discontinuous with the hidden law they are nevertheless entrusted to reveal? Such is, of course, by definition the case with those procedures which assume that phenomenal experience and historical reality are or should be, continuous. Instead of going beyond or beneath the immediate level of temporal consciousness, they simply remain on a superficial plateau where "the ideological obviousness of the continuity of time" (Althusser and Balibar 1970:103) reigns supreme. These procedures are clearly far removed from (though in the end reducible to) the unconscious and synchronic determinants which structural anthropology claims as the hidden motors of historical reality.

But what about structuralist method itself? Can it build scientific models which, though themselves autonomous, are nevertheless able to think that all embracing continuity between the conscious categories of structuralist thought and the unconscious infrastructures of ultimate reality? Here again, we can only reiterate that given Lévi-Strauss's program for cultural anthropology — to elucidate the structural operations and transformed results of the unconscious activities of the human mind — he must and does assume that structuralist thought can build such scientific models.[12]

[11] Lévi-Strauss offers this suggestion as a means of reconciling structuralism with Marxism. Not surprisingly, this attempted "compromise" has been severely criticized by some Marxist ethnologists (see Makarius 1970a and 1970b). The most judicious introduction to the role played by synchrony and diachrony in Marx's own writings may be found in Schmidt (1971a). Marxist structuralism in ethnology is best represented by Godelier (1973) and Terray (1971). For an Anglo-American assessment, see Firth (1972).

[12] A clear statement of Lévi-Strauss's anthropological program is the following: "If, as we

What is of interest here is the extent to which the definition of these models further illustrates Lévi-Strauss's contention that history and historical explanation are derivative while structure and structural explanations are primary. As in the case of the continuum leading from the immediate experience of diachronic continuity to the underlying logic of synchronic discontinuity, so scientific models (and their sociocultural embodiments) are definable in terms of their degree of distance from and/or proximity to the unconscious structures of the human mind. This means that the status and function of conscious models are similar to those of historicist ideologies; they, too, are the via media by means of which the scientist uncovers a more fundamental and unconscious model.

An indigenous or conscious model "permits us to grasp the natives' own conception of their social structure; and, through our examination of the gaps and contradictions, the real structure, which is often very different from the natives' conception, becomes accessible" (Lévi-Strauss 1963b:322). This is significant because "native conscious representations, important as they are, may be just as remote from unconscious reality as any other" (Lévi-Strauss 1963b:282). This unconscious reality is the concern of ethnological inquiry. Historical studies, in contrast, merely organize their data "in relation to conscious expressions of social life" (Lévi-Strauss 1963b:18; see also Lévi-Strauss 1964:541ff).

The thrust of Lévi-Strauss's position is clear, if not always explicit. There is a right and a wrong continuity, as well as a correct and an incorrect discontinuity. The scientist is right in positing a profound continuity between the rational categories of synchronic thought and the neurological principles of unconscious reality. The historicist is wrong in remaining on the superficial level of the obvious continuity between historical consciousness and temporal experience. Though scientific discourse is, by definition and of necessity, discontinuous with its unconscious determination, it is, unlike the historian's discourse, nonetheless able to think that underlying determination. A historicist framework remains discontinuous and indeterminate until such time as the scientist reduces historicism to yet another diachronic variation on an essentially synchronic theme.

Having dethroned historical explanation and historical consciousness (two sides of the same coin [see Jalley-Crampe 1967:56]), Lévi-Strauss next turns his attention to several other notions that are said to attend historicist ideology. One of these is the emphasis on the lived reality of

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believe to be the case, the unconscious activity of the mind consists of imposing forms upon content, and if these forms are fundamentally the same for all minds — ancient and modern, primitive and civilized (as the study of the symbolic function, expressed in language, so strikingly indicates) — it is necessary and sufficient to grasp the unconscious structure underlying each institution and each custom, in order to obtain a principle of interpretation valid for other institutions and customs, provided of course that the analysis is carried far enough" (Lévi-Strauss 1963b:21).

(inter)subjective experience. At first glance Lévi-Strauss, in marked contrast to Althusser of Foucault,[13] seems anxious to reconcile scientific objectivity with existential reality; to mediate, not eliminate, the relationship between historical necessity and subjective intent (see Bourdieu 1968:705ff or Pouillon 1956:165). He maintains, for example, that any objective and comparative analysis must coincide with "the subjectivity of lived experience' (Lévi-Strauss 1950:xxvi). By way of corroboration, Lévi-Strauss even invokes Sartre's name (see Lévi-Strauss 1955:1216). In yet another and related context, he argues that anthropology's ultimate goal "is — to borrow a formula from a recent work of Sartre [1960] — an effort at totalizing an historical becoming at the heart of an individual experience" (Lévi-Strauss 1969a:17).

The overall thrust of Lévi-Strauss's anthropology, however, leads to entirely different results. In the final analysis, such concepts as individuality and totalization are reducible, not irreducible, categories. In case studies, the human being as subjective agent is always analyzed as the logical product of sociocultural (and ultimately neurological) preconditions (see, for example, Lévi-Strauss 1963b and 1950).[14]

Similarly, so-called historical agents are not to be understood as constitutive parties to historical processes, but rather as the structurally determined occupants of social relations and social functions (see Althusser and Balibar 1970:180 or 252). In reality, history has no subject and hence no center (see Althusser 1971:210 or Foucault 1969:268). Having neither subject nor center, totalization is impossible (see Foucault 1969:16). Instead, structuralism advocates a process of *de*totalization, that is, a reductive movement toward those universal and unconscious laws which govern the surface expressions we call existential or historical "totalities."

Epistemologically speaking, the idea that the thinking subject might

[13] Althusser is especially vehement in his criticisms of philosophies of the subject. He considers the latter ideological: "There is no ideology except by the subject and for subjects." Subjectivity is the "constitutive category of all ideology." It is, in turn, a function of ideological intent: "*The category of the subject is only constitutive of ideology insofar as all ideology has the function (which defines it) of 'constituting' concrete individuals as subjects.*" This is not the case, however, for science: ". . . all scientific discourse is by definition subjectless discourse, there is no 'Subject of Science' except in an ideology of science" (Althusser 1971:160). This idea of a subjectless discourse and its inherent irrationality will concern us in the next section. Here as elsewhere, incidently, structuralism contrasts dramatically with phenomenology and Marxist humanism (see especially Paci 1972).

[14] This position at times seems to lead to a sort of structuralist idealism. Thus Godelier: "Rather than taking as our starting-point the individual and the hierarchy of his preferences and intentions, in order to explain the role and relationships of the structure of the society, we should in fact explain all the aspects of his role and relationships, including both those of which society is aware and those of which it is unaware, and seek in this hierarchy of structures the foundation of the hierarchy of values, that is, of the social norms of accepted behavior. Then this hierarchy of values can account for the hierarchy of the needs of individuals playing particular roles and having particular status in society" (Godelier 1970:357).

play a constitutive role in the knowing process is no more tenable than the aforementioned notion that the individual is productively involved in shaping the course of sociohistorical reality or intersubjective experience. The mechanisms of knowledge production are irreducible and autonomous. Any reference to a prereflexive life-world, original ground, constitutive genesis, mediating praxis, etc. are "cheap solutions" and *a priori* suspect (Althusser and Balibar 1970:63).[15] In knowledge production, "the 'subject' plays, not the part it believes it is playing, but the part which is assigned to it by the mechanisms of the process . . ." (Althusser and Balibar 1970:27; see also Andreani 1970:40).

This is also why anthropology can only succeed as an effort toward self objectification, i.e. "making the most intimate subjectivity a means of objective demonstration" (Lévi-Strauss 1967a:26). Not, mind you, as a self-critical or even consciously reflexive activity (though there is some ambiguity on this point), but, more importantly, as a process of "surrendering" to unconscious rationality. Only the unconscious is *unconditionally* objective (see Lévi-Strauss 1963a:12). Referring to the epistemological problem of knowing the ethnographic "other," Lévi-Strauss maintains that the dilemma "would be irresolvable . . . if the opposition between self and other were not surmountable on a level, one where objectivity and subjectivity also meet, we mean to say, the unconscious" (Lévi-Strauss 1950:xxx).[16]

This finally brings me to an issue that has been implicit in much of the discussion thus far: the role of human praxis and dialectical reason. This problem is and always has been enormously complex.[17] Since I cannot enter into this complexity here, suffice it to say that the concepts of praxis and dialectics form and have formed a privileged and central core in most, if not all, historicist philosophies. This is certainly the case for those post-Hegelian traditions (Marxist humanism included) against which the structuralist critique is primarily directed.

This critique follows a familiar path. Scientific objectivity moves from a consideration of praxis (dialectical or otherwise) as lived reality to a preoccupation with structure (analogical or digital) as objective determinant (see Fleischmann 1966:44). Praxis can thus be shown to be a result of structure, not vice versa (as Sartre would have it [see Sartre 1966]). This structure, in turn, is definable by the neurological properties of the human brain. In Lévi-Strauss's opinion, "the initial conditions [of infrastructure] must be given in the form of an objective structure of the psyche and brain without which there would be neither *praxis* nor

[15] Such solutions, "cheap" or not, are at the core of a phenomenological and, I would insist, Marxist position as well (see, for instance, Bourdieu 1973, Paci 1972, and Scholte 1972b).

[16] I am not now concerned with criticizing Lévi-Strauss's position. I will do so later and have done so elsewhere (see bibliography).

[17] See Piquet (1965) for a useful, if elementary, summary.

thought" (Lévi-Strauss 1966b:263–264). I might add that if praxis is derivative rather than primary, history is no longer a privileged reference point for knowledge or knowledge production either (see Lantéri-Laura 1967:134ff).[18]

Could one perhaps argue that the neurological principles of the unconscious mind are themselves dialectical in nature, as Lévi-Strauss's emphasis on digital logic and its transformations would indicate? I do not think so. True, there is a vague resemblance between Lévi-Strauss's use of oppositional logic and certain modes of "dialectical" reasoning.[19] But any resemblance to a genuinely reflexive, historical, critical, emancipatory, and humanistic dialectic is totally incidental, entirely superficial, and purely formal.

In their actual operation, Lévi-Strauss's "dialectical" principles function as analytical categories in disguise. Structuralism's binarism is analytic in construction, movement, and purpose. Digital units are constituent elements whose oppositional and synthetic logic testify to analytical reason's "perpetual efforts . . . to transform itself [as] it aspires to account for language, society, and thought" (Lévi-Strauss 1966b: 246). There is certainly no resemblance here to any historical, dynamic, or constitutive praxis vindicating man's continual efforts to transform himself and his world in order to attain personal freedom and historical totalization.

For Lévi-Strauss, in sum, dialectical reason is a secondary means to an analytic end. The distinction between the two sorts of reasoning "is relative, not absolute"; it "rests only on the temporary gap separating analytic reason from the understanding of life" (Lévi-Strauss 1966b: 246). As we know, this "understanding of life" consists of reducing both praxis and dialectics (as well as their resultant human projects and cultural institutions) to a predetermined, analytical, timeless, and unconscious "Essence."

Lévi-Strauss's critique is, as always, principally directed against Sartre. It is Sartre's understanding of praxis and dialectics which contrasts most dramatically with his own.[20] The most important differences can be summarized as follows: Lévi-Strauss's concept of knowledge, whether applied to the realm of nature or to the domain of culture, is a *fait accompli*. Consciousness is reality's derivative and preconstituted handmaiden. In contrast, Sartre's epistemological categories, especially as

[18] Sebag makes a similar point: "The praxis of individuals and groups restored in all the richness of their determinations obviously corresponds to the science of history; but, inversely, the systems that such a praxis formalizes at every level may be considered as so many products of the human spirit which in every instance structures an extraordinarily diverse given" (Sebag 1964:144).

[19] Precisely those mechanical and reductive caricatures of the dialectic so convincingly criticized by Sartre! (see Sartre 1960 and 1963).

[20] Additional comparisons between Lévi-Strauss and Sartre may be found in Aron (1970), Diamond (1973), Dumasy (1972), Lantéri-Laura (1967), Pouillon (1965), Poulantzas (1966), and Rosen (1971).

applied to history and culture, are open-ended and dialectical. Consciousness is reality's active and constitutive partner. For Lévi-Strauss, historical praxis is merely a transformed variation on a preestablished theme. For Sartre, on the contrary, it is an actively transforming process projected toward a possible truth. To paraphrase Pouillon (see Pouillon 1965), Lévi-Strauss's intent is to find the matter behind and without man; Sartre aspires to find a freedom in and for man.[21]

Lévi-Strauss's critique of historicism can be further discussed and elaborated by considering his views on language and linguistics.[22] Though the specific setting will change, the overriding theme will be familiar: a scientific and reductive rationalism seeking to explain conscious, phenomenal, and intentional activities in terms of an infrastructural closure provided by the unconscious mechanisms of the human brain. As before, the vexing epistemological problem generated by this program for structuralist discourse itself will also be encountered.

Following a definition of language first proposed by de Saussure (see de Saussure 1959), we can say that language is the dialectical product of an underlying and systematic structure (*la langue*) and a conscious and intentional act of speech (*la parole*). As we might suspect, the structuralist is primarily interested in explaining *la parole* in terms of *la langue*, i.e. speech activities by their unconscious infrastructure.

The critic of structuralism, on the other hand, would argue that no unconscious or synchronic *logos* can ever fully account for the context-specific diversity of language usage or the intentional meaning of the spoken word. Nor would such a critic accept a structuralist epistemology which reduces the constitutive act of knowing a given language to a preconstituted and autonomous reason inherent solely in linguistic and scientific discourse. As Pos pointed out in one of the earliest phenomenological critiques of structural linguistics, one should always remember that "the linguist is a linguist thanks to the fact that there is a speaking subject, not despite this fact" (Pos 1939:365).

Sartre, merging the substantive and methodological points, introduces

[21] Pouillon summarizes the basic differences this way: "One is . . . dealing with two radically opposed concepts of the relation of consciousness to reality. For Sartre, consciousness of oneself and of things discovers itself in praxis and, for this reason, it is an understanding of reality: Dialectics is constitutive. For Lévi-Strauss, consciousness, whether pure intellect or practical consciousness, has no such privilege; it thinks it understands the real but its truth is merely functional: Reason is always constituted. In the first case, the relationship to the real is before me and the real is contemporaneous with me; in the second, this relationship is behind me and the real is less the object I think than the condition of the fact that I think it. In the first case the relationship is established by praxis; in the second it is revealed by structure" (Pouillon 1965:59).

[22] This is not surprising. At the turn of the twentieth century, structural linguistics — more than any other discipline — inaugurated the critique against nineteenth-century atomism and historicism (see Cassirer 1945 or Jakobson 1962).

the crux of the issue: "One cannot say . . . that language . . . is that which *speaks itself* in the subject. For the linguistic himself defines language as totality by his acts. There has to be a linguistic subject in order for linguistics to become a science, and a speaking subject in order to go beyond the structures of language towards a totality which will be the linguist's discourse. In other words, subjectivity emerges as the unity of an enterprise that refers back to itself, that is to a certain extent translucid to itself, and that defines itself through its praxis" (Sartre 1966:93).[23]

The structuralist asserts precisely what Sartre claims is impossible: that language speaks itself in the subject. As in the case of historical praxis, so in language activity "what is absolute is *the process without a subject*" (Althusser 1971:119). Not "*je veux dire*" (Ricoeur 1967a:806), but "*je suis parlé*" (Domenach 1967:772). The subject does not speak; rather, the structure of discourse assigns the subject a specific role in speech activity (see Foucault 1969:74ff).[24]

Why should this be the case? Lévi-Strauss's answer is predictable: because of the role played by the unconscious. He paraphrases Pascal: "Language, as unreflecting totalization, is human reason which has its reasons and of which man knows nothing" (Lévi-Strauss 1966b:252). The critic might reply that *la parole* has its reasons too and that these are not necessarily the same as those of *la langue*. Certainly "before one goes to the length of invoking an unconscious logos, at work alike in the spoken word and the institution, one should perhaps first clarify the lived meanings that are experienced by men [and women] speaking the language. In any case, one should join to any logic of the language a phenomenology of the spoken word" (Dufrenne 1963:39; see also Verstraeten 1963:63ff).[25]

Not so for the structuralist. Speech activities have the same practical status as historical events. They are not important in their own right but as

[23] The translation of Sartre's remarks here is by Josephine Diamond. I should add that in actual fact the question of the priority of *la langue* or *la parole* is one of purpose and perspective (see Verhaar 1973); the two are not mutually exclusive. A language is always *both* system and activity (see Benson's remark in Dyson-Hudson [1970:243–244] or Ricoeur [1967a:819ff]). Merleau-Ponty was especially attentive to this fact and apparently tried to reconcile phenomenology and structuralism in some way (see Merleau-Ponty 1960). This does not, of course, mean that Merleau-Ponty became a structuralist (see Donato 1970 or Edie 1971). He retained an essentially phenomenological concept of language activity. "*La parole parlante* still takes precedence over *la parole parlée*" (Lewis 1966:33). The diachronic and subjective still envelop the synchronic and objective. The symbolic still retains an irreducible reservoir of meaning. Interestingly enough, none other than Ricoeur criticizes Merleau-Ponty for not being structuralist enough! (see Ricoeur 1969:244ff).

[24] This seems to be Heidegger's position as well (see Dufrenne 1967 and 1968). "Language is in its essence neither an expression nor an activity of man. *Language* speaks" (Heidegger cited in Palmer 1969:154).

[25] Verhaar goes even further: ". . . behind a *langue* intuition (Chomsky's competence) there is *langage* intuition; only humans know pre-analytically, and at first, of course, only implicitly, what it is to use human languages. This has methodological priority. If one calls this *parole*-analysis, then *parole* comes first" (Verhaar 1973:423).

surface illustrations of the hidden working of the unconscious mind. The latter explains phenomena; hence it, not they, should be the focus of attention. The structuralist is no more interested in the semantic and pragmatic role of language than he is in the purpose and praxis of historical events. He is primarily concerned with the logic or code which is said to make both history and language possible and intelligible. In structural analysis, "what is required is not the tracing of a pedigree but the deciphering of a code" (Runciman 1969:258; see also Funt 1969:624 or Wald 1969:20). This code is housed in the "place" where languages and histories are fabricated. The structuralist wants to know *how* this place is constructed (see Foucault 1969:39), not who built it or to what end. In semiotic terms, the structuralist is interested in "*homo significans*" (Barthes 1967b:78), not *homo faber* nor *homo symbolicum*.[26]

What requires an explanation is not *la parole* in its intentional unfolding, but the fact that *la parole* exists at all (see Lacroix 1968:224); that man "*is* one who speaks" (Lévi-Strauss 1966b:252; my emphasis). An explanation is provided by the preexisting and unconscious logic of *la langue*. The latter is not further reducible; it can only be understood in its own (logical) terms (see Sebag 1964:115). The structuralists claim that when Sartre and others try to understand signification as a moment of praxis, as a function of sociohistorical context (see Sartre 1963:156), they are confusing their priorities. Praxis (whether language praxis or historical praxis) is itself "developed in a pre-symbolized universe and no prior transcendence [*surgissement*] of this symbolization is possible" (Sebag 1964:129).[27]

Sebag herewith announces a familiar and crucial structuralist dictum: "The dynamics of subjectivity [or *la parole*] are incomprehensible without reference to a signifying system [or *la langue*] *which is encountered, not engendered*" (Sebag 1964:134).[28]

[26] See also Barthes's delineation of the syntagmatic, paradigmatic, and symbolic orientations (Barthes 1967a:206ff).

[27] Sartre's critique of Sebag's position might be that it is "an absurd juxtaposition of a contingent residue with an *a priori* signification" (Sartre 1963:126).

[28] Bourdieu's criticism, while not explicitly directed at either Sebag or this specific issue, is nonetheless apropos: structuralism "transfers the objective truth established by science into a practice which excludes the disposition which would make it possible to establish this truth. . . . Everything conspires to encourage the reification of concepts, beginning with the logic of ordinary language, which is inclined to infer the substance from the substantive or to award to concepts the power to act in history in the same way as the words designating them act in the sentences of historical discourse, that is as *historical subjects*." This Bourdieu considers characteristic of "the paralogism underlying legalism." It "consists in implicitly placing in the consciousness of individual agents the theoretical knowledge which can only be constructed and conquered against practical experience; in other terms, it consists of conferring the value of an anthropological description upon a theoretical model constructed in order to account for practices. The theory of action as simple *execution* of a model (in the dual sense of norm and of scientific construction) is only one example among many of the imaginary anthropology engendered by objectivism when taking, as Marx puts it, 'things of logic for the logic of things' . . ." (Bourdieu 1973:60-63).

Before assessing the substantive implications of structural semiotics, let me make a short digression to discuss the recent debate between Paul Ricoeur and Lévi-Strauss on the question of myth analysis. As might be expected, the dispute in part revolves around the question of history and historical explanation. The alternatives are familiar: whereas for "historicism, to understand is to find the genesis," for structuralism, it is "the schemes, the systematic organizations in a given state which are intelligible first" (Ricoeur 1963b:6).

What for our present purpose is significant about the rejection of historicism is structuralism's attendant avoidance of the "hermeneutic circle." A structuralist epistemology is not reflexive in the sense that a historically conditioned and intentionally motivated interpreter "wills" a text or object of analysis in the constitutive context of a situated and immanent relevance. A hermeneutic epistemology, in contrast, considers the tie between historical context, conscious intent, and textual interpretation as crucial to a proper reading or understanding.[29]

The structuralist rejects this emphasis on the constitutive role of the situated interpreter because, as we know, the latter's epistemological status is secondary and derivative. Instead, the structure of the discourse in question decides the role to be played by the interpreter. Thus, in the case of myth analysis, "the ethnologist may consider [his] mediating consciousness as a simple variant of [the] initial myth" (Sebag 1965:1612).[30] Unlike the hermeneutic interpreter, the structural analyst thus seeks "to cancel out his own subjectivity . . . and, above all, to never interpret a symbol [let alone an entire myth corpus] on the basis of the efficacy it may have for him as a historically situated individual" (Sebag 1965:1611–1612). To do otherwise would relegate the actual analysis to a mere variant of the myth analyzed.

True, such interpretative variants may themselves be of great scientific interest. But only on condition that they be understood as transformations of an underlying code. From this perspective, the subjective import of the myth or myth variant matters very little. Its internal structure does. Whereas the former is discontinuous with objective reality, the latter is not. It is in the final analysis continuous with that immanent and preexisting rationality of which structural interpretation also forms (an autonomous) part.

How a myth variant can under these circumstances still be "true" is explained by the epistemological justification Lévi-Strauss gives for con-

[29] For example, Ricouer's kerygmatic models for the "*re*assessment" of traditional Christian mythology (see Ricoeur 1964:93ff).

[30] Lévi-Strauss's analysis of the role of Freud's psychoanalytic interpretation of the Oedipal myth provides a concrete illustration (see Lévi-Strauss 1963b:217ff; for a critical assessment, see Green 1963).

sidering even his own work on myth as "itself a kind of myth" (Lévi-Strauss 1969b:6).[31] Let me quote at some length:

> If the final aim of anthropology is to contribute to a better knowledge of objectified thought and its mechanisms, it is in the last resort immaterial whether in this book the thought processes of the South American Indians take shape through the medium of my thought, or whether mine take shape through the medium of theirs. What matters is that the human mind, regardless of the identity of those who happen to be giving it expression, should display an increasingly intelligible structure as a result of the doubly reflexive forward movement of two thought processes acting upon the other, either of which can in turn provide the spark or tinder whose conjunction will shed light on both (Lévi-Strauss 1969b:13).

I should like to emphasize that, despite appearances to the contrary, Lévi-Strauss's statement can in no sense be understood as a hermeneutical or dialectical one. His book on myth is *not* "itself a kind of myth" because an empathetic, if situated, interpreter reconstructs the meaning and the purpose of these myths for himself or for the South American Indians. Structuralism's reductive and analytical underpinnings are ever-present — as an examination of its semiotics will show.

As I have stressed, a structural analysis focusses on syntactic structure rather than on pragmatic result or semantic intent. Even the interpreter is considered as a "pli-grammatical" (Lacroix 1968:224) in the structure of the discourse or the chrono-*logic* of events. These priorities obviously affect the "style" of myth analysis as well. Let us look at Ricoeur and Lévi-Strauss again.

Whereas Ricoeur is above all concerned with preserving the contextual richness and distinctive meaning of a given myth (precisely because the analysis could thereby generate a historically novel meaning [see Ricoeur 1963b:21]), Lévi-Strauss is primarily interested in a myth's structural features (see Glucksmann 1965:209ff). Since a myth's internal logic is hidden in or "behind" the text, it can only be reached through a structural analysis of its code. A deliberate "semantic impoverishment" (Lévi-Strauss 1966b:105) often results.[32]

In sum, structuralism is interested in signification understood as a morphology of signs "which plays the part of a synthesizing operator between ideas and facts" (Lévi-Strauss 1966b:131). The actual contents of the references themselves are of derivative importance (see Lévi-Strauss 1966b:75). Or rather, their semantic function is determined by their relative position within a given sign system (see Granger 1968:138ff). It is therefore fallacious to begin the analysis of a text with questions about its meaning or purpose. That would be tantamount to

[31] As I shall show later, Lévi-Strauss's own justification is by no means the only reason for considering his work on mythology as "itself a kind of myth."

[32] Althusser's "reading" of Marx's texts proceeds in the same way (see Scholte 1972b). Here, too, "the values of an impeccable theory sacrifice the imponderables of meaning" (Verhaar 1971:62).

putting the semantic-laden cart before the functionally operative horse (see Sebag 1965:166ff).[33]

The semiotic priority proposed by structuralism is unacceptable to its critics for an obvious reason. The symbolic function (which structural anthropology must take for granted as an *a priori* faculty of the human mind [see Lévi-Strauss 1946:517–518]) is in reality not a semantic and contextual function at all, but a syntactic and textual one. Symbolic meaning is understood in purely relational terms; there is as such no reference to a mediating intention (see Ricoeur 1967b:16).

But how, then, can Lévi-Strauss claim that structural anthropology is one of the semiological sciences because it takes meaning as its guiding principle and studies "meaningful wholes" (Lévi-Strauss 1963b:364, 380)? Even if we grant that logical structures can bring symbolic meanings into play, do the former therefore determine and exhaust the latter's sense and use (see Dufrenne 1963:39)? A structure may, of course, provide the matrix for meaning, but does it also imprison that meaning (see Ladrière 1967:824)? Certainly in the case of mythic discourse, one could ask: "What sort of explanation is this where the stark regimen of a logic deprived of meaning triumphs over the semantic anarchy of metaphor?" (Campell 1973:102).

The crucial issue in any theory of meaning is not one of text, but one of *con*text (see Lefebvre 1971:399). Meaning is never exhausted by a mere text, by "a *corpus* already constituted, arrested, closed, and — in this sense — dead" (Ricoeur 1967a:801). Meaning is also generated by a context, in the creative act of speaking, "of saying something [to someone], of returning the sign to a thing" (Ricoeur 1967a: 808). Signification alone may or may not be contextual (see Wilden 1972:184). But meaning as embodied in praxis can never be replaced nor explained by a mere combinatory syntax (see Lefebvre 1966:218ff). Doing so substitutes the differential for the referential (see Dufrenne 1968:64ff). That is why structural analysis seems to differentiate ad infinitum (see Hymes 1964:15): ". . . structuralism has nothing to interpret nor to comprehend; nothing to understand, but everything to transform" (Wahl 1968:328–329). This stated "abandonment of all reference to a *center*, a *subject*, to a privileged *reference*, to an *origin*, or to an absolute *archè*" (Derrida 1970:256–257) is at the heart of the structuralist impasse.[34]

[33] Structuralism's priorities are in keeping with its intellectualism: "Structuralist research reveals the unity of the human spirit and the systematic character of all forms of intellectual activity. . . . [It thereby] opens the way to a morphology of types of discourses, founded not on considerations external to the intellect, but on the diverse combinations of their constituent elements" (Sebag 1965:1622). Generative grammar, incidently, is similarly motivated (despite its interest in transformations rather than morphologies); here, too, "the question . . . is not so much what goes on in the speaker's utterances but what goes on in the speaker's mind as he utters the utterances" (Verhaar 1973:407).

[34] Some critics of structuralism, most notably Ricoeur, claim that Chomsky's generative grammar supercedes Lévi-Strauss's structural logic because transformationalism, unlike

Before detailing this impasse, let me review the major implications of Lévi-Strauss's structural semiotics for his anthropological program as a whole. Lévi-Strauss's entire enterprise is based on three interrelated principles: first, "exchange is a universal practice of social life;[35] second, the former is "inseparable from signification"; and, finally, "the emergence of symbolism gives rise to both exchange and signification which, therefore, are by necessity permanently connected" (Simonis 1973:15). In sum, an anthropological discourse on the social universe must be constructed on the *a priori* principles which inhere in the universe of social discourse.

In a restricted sense the argument states that the emergence of symbolism coincides with the emergence of culture — the proper subject matter of anthropology. But the structuralist edifice does not end here. If one further asks how this symbolic function may be defined, one finds that both its definition and its function are identical with those of the unconscious brain. The latter, too, is characterized by the need for exchange, the presence of regulatory principles (i.e. a code or syntax) and the synthetic integration of transferred values (i.e. signification within a sign system) (see Lévi-Strauss 1969c:84).

To equate the symbolic function (culture) with the unconscious brain (nature) has two important consequences. One we know. The proposition that scientific explanation consists of reducing cultural phenomena to "their underlying nature as symbolic systems" (Simonis 1973:19) is to be understood in syntactic rather than in semantic terms. Since symbolic systems are logical systems, meaning, in the sense of plenitude, plays an entirely secondary role. Meaning "is always reducible . . . the recovery of meaning is secondary and derivative compared with the essential work which consists of taking apart the mechanisms of an objectified thought" (Lévi-Strauss 1970a:64, 66).[36]

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structuralism, reintroduces the constitutive role of the speaking subject into linguistic explanation. Some have even argued that Chomsky therefore renovates the notion of communicative context (see Corvez 1969, Dubois 1967, or Ricoeur 1967a). I completely disagree and share the point of view of those who consider such a reading of Chomsky as fundamentally deceptive (see Edie 1970 or Ihde 1971:176). As Dell Hymes has made abundantly clear (see Hymes 1972, 1973, n.d.), Chomsky seeks an essential adequacy in rational theory of human potentiality (competence). He is not interested in existential adequacy as evidenced by sociolinguistic praxis and context (performance). True, Chomsky himself does not approve of structural anthropology (see Chomsky 1968:65). Still, it is not at all surprising that many "structuralists" have had no reservations about comparing rather than contrasting Chomsky's linguistics with Lévi-Strauss's anthropology (see, for example, Buchler and Selby 1968, Nutini 1968, or Nicolas Ruwet's work; [1963, 1964, 1967]).

[35] I do not have time to discuss this important principle at any great length here. See Scholte (1973a) or Simonis (1968a) for details. I should add, however, that in announcing this principle (initially derived from Marcel Mauss), Lévi-Strauss is thinking of the exchange between goods (economy), between signs (language), and between alliance groups (kinship).

[36] For this reason, the means and ends of structural explanation are the reverse of "commonsense " procedures. Intelligibility "is not a question of translating extrinsically

I will be concerned with the second consequence of defining the symbolic function in terms of a neurological mechanism in the next section. To anticipate briefly and to show its intimate connection with our present concern, let me point out that any equation between cultural phenomena and natural processes effectively obliterates the distinction (and hence the dialectic) between them. That is why in structuralism, one can arrive "at the physical world by the detour of communication" or arrive "at the world of communication by the detour of the physical" (Lévi-Strauss 1966b:269).

The fact that in the human sciences this universal closure is specifically anchored in the human mind in no way alters the materialistic and reductionistic intent of structural anthropology.[37] This is evidenced by the answer to the question of the mind's "nature" and its relation to the cosmos: "As the mind too is a thing, the functioning of this thing teaches us something about the nature of things; even pure reflection is in the last analysis an internalization of the cosmos" (Lévi-Strauss 1966b:248). Reductionism is explicit in the answer to the question of how the mind qua "thing" becomes scientifically intelligible: By reducing it to its underlying reality as a symbolic function, by revealing its common bond with the cosmos. Thus, ". . . a thing is the object of science to the extent that my mind communicates with it, rather than solely with itself. If the mind communicates with things, it is in the final analysis because things, contrary to ordinary conception have, like the mind, physical and semantic properties" (Simonis 1973:19–20).[38]

This extraordinary conception is not without internal problems. The semiotic closure provided by structuralist thought, the continuity it postulates between a conception of reality (its own) and the nature of that reality, could affect the inverse assumption as well: that this continuity is posited and known by a scientific rationality which is also *dis*continuous with its subject matter. What if the latter assumption were gratuitous? What if the semiotic closure desired were total and encompassing? What, in other words, if structuralist method were in essence *con*tinuous, not discontinuous, with structuralism's reality?

Lévi-Strauss is himself aware of the "cosmic" implications of this possibility for both structuralist epistemology and structural semiotics:

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given data into symbols" (Simonis 1973:19), but of reducing such data to their intrinsic symbolic infrastructure. In other words, symbols are more real than the phenomena they symbolize; the signifier is more significant than the signified (see Simonis 1973:19ff).

[37] This is also how the quotation from Lévi-Strauss (1969b:13), discussed previously, should be read.

[38] Semantic properties which are in turn reducible to codal features that govern both the physical world (like the structure of DNA molecules) and the semiotic world (the grammar or logic of signification). Beadle's rhapsodic contention is of interest here; "The deciphering of the DNA code has revealed our possession of a language much older than hieroglyphics, a language as old as life itself, a language that is the most living language of all" (Beadle cited in Jakobson 1971:678).

When we make an effort to understand, we destroy the object of our attachment, substituting another whose nature is quite different. That other object requires of us another effort, which in its turn destroys the second object and substitutes a third — and so on until we reach the only enduring Presence, which is that in which *all distinction between meaning and the absence of meaning disappears*: and it is from that Presence that we started in the first place (Lévi-Strauss 1967b:394; my emphasis).[39]

This raises a crucial problem: to understand the implications of Lévi-Strauss's remarks for structuralist discourse itself.

To fully appreciate the importance of the forementioned problem, I must briefly introduce another major theme in Lévi-Strauss's writings: the transition from nature to culture.[40] For Lévi-Strauss, this passage constitutes the most significant step to have taken place in human evolution. In fact, it defines the very essence of that evolution. The transition from nature to culture is a multiple one: introducing at one and the same time the passage from animality to humanity, instinct to intellect, literal to figurative (the emergence of the symbolic function), and from continuous to discrete (from analogical to digital logic). Most, if not all, man's intellectual creations and social institutions can be understood as more or less successful means for understanding or mediating this multiple transition from the naturally given to the culturally constituted.

To give but one example:[41] the incest prohibition is the universal social

[39] Similarly Ricoeur: "... as far as you [i.e. Lévi-Strauss] are concerned there is no 'message' — not in the cybernetic, but in the kerygmatic sense; you despair of meaning; but you console yourself with the thought that, if men have nothing to say, at least they say it so well that their discourse is amenable to structuralism. You retain meaning, but it is the meaning of non-meaning, the admirable, syntactical arrangement of a discourse which has nothing to say. I see you as occupying this conjunction of agnosticism and a hyperintelligence of syntax. Thereby you are at once fascinating and disquieting" (Ricoeur in Lévi-Strauss 1970a:74). I disagree with Ricoeur only over the term "agnosticism." Like Nietzche, "I suspect that we have not yet gotten rid of God, since we still have faith in grammar" (Nietzsche quoted by Wilden 1972:445).

[40] Given the theme's importance, a few parenthetical remarks are in order. First of all, we cannot work out this theme in the kind of detail it doubtless deserves. This has been done fully and brilliantly by Simonis (Simonis 1968a). Secondly, Lévi-Strauss traces his indebtedness for this theme to Rousseau. He even credits Rousseau with having "an extraordinarily modern view" of the transition from nature to culture: one based on "the emergence of a logic operating by means of binary oppositions and coinciding with the first manifestations of symbolism" (Lévi-Strauss 1963c:101). Finally, it should be mentioned that Lévi-Strauss at one point minimized the importance of the nature to culture transition (see Lévi-Strauss's footnote in 1966b:247). Some have therefore concluded that the issue is a purely epistemological one, that is, a problem strictly "internal to scientific knowledge" (Dumasy 1972:206). I must disagree. The entire *Mythologiques* is based on the substantive import of the distinction between nature and culture. Or again, as recently as 1970, Lévi-Strauss contends that "there are no natural phenomena in an uncultured state [*à l'état brut*]; for man, the latter exist only conceptually and are filtered through logical and affective norms amenable to culture" (Lévi-Strauss 1970b:12).

[41] Other notable examples include totemism (see Lévi-Strauss 1963c) and mythology (see Lévi-Strauss 1969b, 1966a, 1968, and 1971). Diverse classificatory systems are also considered in this light in Lévi-Strauss 1966b.

principle "because of which, by which, and, above all in which, the transition from nature to culture is accomplished" (Lévi-Strauss 1969c:24). The incest prohibition recognizes, on the one hand, the universal biological necessity for sexual reciprocity in the procreative process; on the other, it also mediates this natural necessity by a cultural means: a proscriptive rule that men shall marry "out," shall form socially defined marital alliances.[42]

Nature may require a biological alliance between a man and a woman, but culture decides which category of man and woman shall be allied and in what specific ways. The incest taboo, in other words, "results from a social reflection *upon* a natural phenomenon"; it is a cultural and institutional "*intervention*" in a natural and biological domain (Lévi-Strauss 1969c:13, 32). The incest prohibition thus "affirms, in a field vital to the group's survival, the preeminence of the social over the natural, the collective over the individual, organization over the arbitrary" (Lévi-Strauss 1969c:45). In this sense, the incest taboo is the condition for, and the promise of, cultural life itself (see Simonis 1968a:48ff).

But how is cultural life explained? Here structuralism's reductive intent reasserts itself in a familiar format. Whereas anthropological intelligibility proceeds from nature to culture, anthropological explanation proceeds in reverse: from cultural forms to their natural foundations. In the case of the incest prohibition, for instance, the socially defined marital alliances are explained by an underlying semiotic code (the exchange of women qua signs) which is in turn the product of "certain fundamental structures of the human mind" (Lévi-Strauss 1969c:75). These regulatory, reciprocal, synthetic structures of the human mind are, of course, a property of the unconscious brain. As such, they are part and parcel of nature and biology (see Lévi-Strauss 1969c:8ff). The socially specific expressions to which the incest taboo gives rise, then, are "rooted" in and explained by the natural, not the cultural, order.

Other results of the transition from nature to culture are similarly analyzed. In every instance, Lévi-Strauss speaks about the substance of culture as if it were an emergent level of reality. But he speaks about its subsequent explanation as if culture were an integral part of nature. The overall process is always one in which "we go from culture towards nature, we seek to understand how the cultural is anchored in the natural, we thereby seek to render it intelligible" (Simonis 1968a:54). If culture mediates the natural (human self-realization), nature, in turn, explains the cultural (scientific understanding).

That the transition from animality to humanity is made possible by the emergence of the symbolic function adds a certain explanatory momentum, but does not change the basic argument. What the scientific study of

[42] Cross and /or parallel cousin marriage systems are privileged examples.

the symbolic function shows is how peoples' intellectual efforts are aimed at mediating and understanding the transition from nature to culture. The structural anthropologist can detail the indigenous structures of diverse "ethno-logics" in this light. And he can show how specific cultural forms, like art (see Lévi-Strauss 1966b:24ff), music (see Lévi-Strauss 1969b:27ff), and language (see Lévi-Strauss 1967b:25ff) produce their own distinctive unification between nature and culture, system and meaning, event and structure, content and form, intuition and reason.

When it comes to the scientific explanation of the symbolic function, however, Lévi-Strauss's argument remains the same: an uncompromising and reductive materialism is again invoked. Conscious systems of classification are produced by a symbolic function which is in turn the result of an unconscious infrastructure. In that event, man's intellectual efforts do not really bear witness to a distinctive quest for human intelligibility at all. Rather, they vindicate nature's iron laws (in man's case those of the brain) and thus the ultimate *continuity* between animality and humanity. In the final analysis, men and women can be studied in the same way as ants and, along with everything else, can be reduced to their physiochemical properties (see Lévi-Strauss 1966b:246ff).[43]

Not only can this reductive materialism be held accountable for the pervasive pessimism of Lévi-Strauss's anthropology,[44] it must also be charged with an ironic and illogical consequence: structural anthropology renders the human condition inexplicable because its explanatory momentum actually dissolves and nullifies concrete men and women (the "zero degree" of structuralist discourse). As Simonis remarks:

> Structuralism is interested in the workings of the human spirit, in its natural condition. It has the ability to restore us to our basic finitude, to still our sense of "transcendence," hoping even to suppress it. Structuralism yields to this finitude, it makes it the truth about man and tries to reverse the direction of human intelligibility by founding it on an unconscious system which remains beyond our influence. *It constitutes the negation of all anthropology* (Simonis 1968a:344; my emphasis; see also Zimmerman 1968:60ff).

[43] The explicit analogy between the study of human beings and the study of ants (one offered in reply to Sartre [see Lévi-Strauss 1966b:246]) is not acceptable even by cybernetic standards (see Wiener 1954:51ff). Perhaps people like Norbert Wiener, more so than Lévi-Strauss, shared Henri Bergson's opinion of ants: they "are at the great impasse of life because with them organization has succeeded, but they have no history" (Bergson quoted by Ricoeur 1964:91.

[44] Both Lévi-Strauss's pessimism and its cybernetic "inspiration" are evident in the following reflections on the implications of the second law of thermodynamics: "The world began without the human race and it will end without it. . . . Man has never — save only when he reproduces himself — done other than cheerfully dismantle million upon million of structures and reduce their elements to a state in which they can no longer be reintegrated. . . . 'Entropology,' not anthropology, should be the word for the discipline that devotes itself to the study of this process of disintegration in its most highly evolved forms" (Lévi-Strauss 1967b:397).

Is there perhaps another possibility, even for Lévi-Strauss? Is the negation of anthropology in reality an affirmation of something else? There is in Lévi-Strauss's structuralism a mystical and aesthetic strain that leads one to believe that a possible transcendence does exist. In fact, in a sense Lévi-Strauss's ultimate aim is the obverse of reductionism: it is "a sort of *super-rationalism* in which sense perceptions are integrated into reasoning and yet lose none of their properties" (Lévi-Strauss 1967b:61).

More recently, Lévi-Strauss has gone even further. In the remarkable "finale" of *L'homme nu* (1971), not merely sense and reason are integrated, but myth and history, art and science, anthropology and genetics, rationality and the cosmos, conceptualization and being, mind and body, etc, as well. The "finale" constitutes a poetic celebration of an integrated cosmology, including not only "humanity itself, but, beyond humanity . . . all manifestations of life" (Lévi-Strauss 1971:620).

Let me ask another and related question: what human activity most closely approximates this all-embracing integration? The answer is surprising: not science, but *art* — especially *music*. Music is "the supreme mystery of the science of man, a mystery that all the various disciplines come up against and which holds the key to their progress" (Lévi-Strauss 1969b:18). Why? Because music "hypermediates" the transition from nature to culture. How? By integrating two "grids": the one external, historical, and cultural; the other internal, organic, and natural (see Lévi-Strauss 1969b:16ff).

Is this, therefore, the alternative possibility? Will musical creation circumvent the epistemological reductionism of structuralist discourse? Not if we further ask what in the final analysis explains the genesis of music's "hypermediation." Then we come back to a familiar argument: the integration of nature and culture is, as always, made possible by the unconscious properties of the human brain.

The result is paradoxical, even tragic. Man's valiant efforts at mediating the transition from nature to culture are in essence illusionary and inadequate. Even musical works (and by extension language, philosophy, mythology, etc) can do no more than "bring man face to face with potential objects of which only the shadows are actualized, with conscious approximations . . . of inevitably unconscious truths which follow from them" (Lévi-Strauss 1969b:17–18). Behind man's consciously creative cultural activities there invariably looms an unconsciously determining biological reality: the human brain. One is tempted to ask: why, in the face of the futility of these Penelopean efforts, the stubborn quest for intelligibility in the first place? (see Scholte 1969 or Verstraeten 1963:517ff).

Yet the quest is always there, even in Lévi-Strauss's own discourse. This despite the paradoxical impasse to which structuralism leads. Structuralist discourse, no more than myth or music, will ever approximate, let

alone realize, a truly integrative dialogue with a hidden unconscious. The structuralist has placed himself in an impossible epistemological position: to really understand the mysterious workings of infrastructural reality, he must become the *silent* listener to its orchestrated physiological pulsations.

In another sense, however, even a discontinuous metaphor about a hidden reality is preferable to mere silence. The question, therefore, is not silence but what kind of metaphor? Whose metaphors most successfully mediate between the invisible laws of nature and the visible expressions of culture? The answer: the artist, especially the composer. The implication is clear: structuralism is only part science. The closer it comes to realizing its own inner logic, the more it must become aesthetic metaphor. Structural anthropology, "even assuming it begins in science, can only terminate as art" (Simonis 1968a:314).[45]

Lévi-Strauss himself would probably not subscribe to this conclusion. He seeks to explain metonymically and scientifically what "primitive" thought and artistic activity try to create metaphorically and aesthetically. The philosophical legitimacy and internal consistency of the former effort stands or falls on the assumption introduced at the beginning of this paper: a discontinuous science can nonetheless posit an all-embracing continuity.

The viability of this assumption is severely tested by Lévi-Strauss's own definition of the continuity posited. The latter is, as we know, a totally reductive and thoroughly materialistic one. There are even indications in Lévi-Strauss's writings that the continuity (and the cosmology which attends it) is so extensive and all-embracing that it affects and embraces structuralist science itself. If so, the assumption that science and reality are indeed discontinuous becomes entirely gratuitous.

If my interpretation is correct,[46] structuralism must be understood as a "scientific" discourse hoping to emancipate itself from a "cosmic" truth whose finality it nonetheless assumes. It must try to do so, not in terms of a metonymic discourse on a reducible social universe, but in the context of an irreducible aesthetic universe of metaphoric discourse. This is the only alternative Lévi-Strauss, the poet-musician manqué, can offer to Foucault's vacuous philosophic laughter. Failing such a response, structuralist discourse would, indeed, become (partly) silent.

[45] Marc-Lipiansky arrives at a comparable conclusion: "The paradoxical ambition of structuralism is to undertake the study of metaphoric language, founded on analogy, by following a metonymic path and by using a differential logic." Thus, "structuralism aspires to silence and despairs that it must get there by means of language" (1973:321, 324). Wilden, too, makes this point: "A study of Lévi-Strauss's style and of the metaphors his discourse employs so effectively, would reveal a great deal about the apparent contradiction between his explicit epistemology and his implicit epistemology. The further he moves away from rhetorical appeals to the status he confers on 'hard' science, the more explicitly 'metaphorical' or 'poetic' — and properly scientific — he becomes" (Wilden 1972:379).

[46] Again, I owe a great deal to Simonis's book (1968a).

Aside from Lévi-Strauss's dilemma, what are the anthropological alternatives to structuralism in terms of the specific issues discussed? The crux of the structuralist position and its logical impasse lies, I believe, in the precarious assumption that anthropological science and infrastructural reality are both continuous and discontinuous. Discontinuous in that scientific activity is defined by its own autonomous praxis (see Granger 1968); continuous because anthropological science nevertheless discovers (and is in turn made possible by) structural universals inherent in an invisible reality.

Contra Lévi-Strauss, I would argue that the alleged autonomy of scientific praxis cannot simply be assumed. In fact, a radical discontinuity between experience and reality is not tenable even from a strictly scientific point of view (see Bateson 1972 or Wilden 1972). Further, the very idea of a total(izing) and objective rationality may itself be a social and ideological artifact.[47] Finally, any encompassing continuity that anthropological science could discover would always be the end product of critical labor and self-reflection. It could not be the result of an *a priori* definition. It would have to be the hoped-for achievement of scientific praxis considered as human activity — conditioned and mediated by subjective agents, historical conditions, language activities, and cultural circumstances.[48]

How do these alternative possibilities[49] affect the central issues dealt with in this essay? What, firstly, about the problem of history and historical explanation? I do think that Lévi-Strauss's critique of historicism is a significant and justifiable one. This is certainly true to the extent that his normative misgivings about the largely Western myth of historical progress serves as an important anthropological reminder to all of us working

[47] This has been the subject of numerous essays, for example Goldmann (1966), Lefebvre (1966 and 1971), and Wald (1969).

[48] After quoting Marx — "To be radical is to grasp things by the root; but for man the root is man himself" — I elsewhere argued: ". . . structuralism is not *anthropo*logical, that is, radical, enough. Instead of realizing that "man makes the science of himself (Krader 1973:9) and that a *logic* of society can never be entirely severed from its *socio*logical millieu, structuralism dichotomizes the relation between scientific activity and human praxis. . . . This is tantamount to a fetishization of scientific categories. . . . Structural anthropology [thus] reifies the *texts* of ethno*logical* systems at the expense of understanding the *con*texts of *ethno*logical activities. . . . Once the relation between theory and praxis . . . is rendered discontinuous, any radical understanding of the mediat*ing* and mediat*ed* status of anthropological discourse is precluded. Structuralism, which is relativistic 'in every sense but the most critical' (Diamond 1973:4), thus violates the most crucial anthropological principle of all: That 'the study of man is at the same time man's act upon himself as subject and as object, . . . a mode of labour that is the precondition and the consequence of every other' (Krader 1973:9). Precisely because it is not radical in this fundamental sense, structuralism is doomed to remain the intellectual prisoner of a 'social metaphysics' (Diamond 1973:13). . . . Given Lévi-Strauss's transcendental aspirations, the conclusion is ironic: . . . structural anthropology is in reality 'a first-class ethnographic document,' exemplary of the 'mythology of our time' (Lévi-Strauss 1962a:249)" (Scholte 1973b:1–2).

[49] Ones which could be called paradigmatic rather than syntagmatic (see Scholte 1973c).

within the "ethnocentric" context of a Judeo-Christian tradition. Too often we uncritically privilege historical awareness and the progressive or teleological purpose it presumably reveals simply because this is a built-in part of a belief system peculiar to Occidental philosophy. This does not, obviously, give it any ethnological or comparative validity. In fact, all too often this myth has served to rationalize a brutal exploitation of "lesser" races under the ideological rubric of the "white man's burden." (see Jaulin 1970).

This much said, I must add that I find Lévi-Strauss's proposed "solution," the relativization of diachronic explanation and the hypostatization of a synchronic essence, no solution at all. It leaves the most important question unanswered: the extent to which cultural anthropology, structuralism included, is also the intellectual product of a specific sociohistorical circumstance. This circumstance or tradition may generate an ethnocentric variant on the myth of historicism which Lévi-Strauss rightly condemns. But he is mistaken in refusing to accept the critical implications of being himself a product of that tradition, though not, perhaps, of the particular myth in question.[50] Lévi-Strauss, in other words, prematurely arrests the momentum of his critique at the very moment when he should have extended it to include the sociohistorical genesis of structuralism itself.[51]

Lévi-Strauss does not do so because he assumes that scientific rationality is discontinuous with the sociohistorical context of anthropological praxis. Or, to put the same thing negatively, the structuralist edifice is not hermeneutically sealed. It does not include critical provisions for the reflexive understanding of its own paradigmatic foundations.

Lévi-Strauss, then, severs the crucial relation between theory and praxis, intellectual labor and sociohistorical critique. Structuralism's mission is "to understand Being in relation to itself, and not in relation to oneself" (Lévi-Strauss 1967b:62). "Being" is that silent and synchronic Essence that precedes and explains history and consciousness. It "rethinks" history in the abstract by hypostatizing it in toto. Since I understand "It" in relation to "Itself" alone, I am not required to rethink history in the concrete, i.e. in terms of history's mediating role in effecting the specificity of my own scientific praxis.

This is throwing out the baby with the bathwater. One cannot simply posit an autonomous science of a continuous rationality by means of a theoretical definition, i.e. by ignoring or reducing history rather than by

[50] It could be argued, of course, that Lévi-Strauss's emphasis on "common denominators" is itself a reflection on *our* history and *our* civilization (see Jaulin 1970:230ff or Sibley 1971).

[51] If structuralism were to reconstitute itself historically, it might no longer be so opposed to historical explanation either (see Castel 1964:978). Is it not true that "the problem of history is the history of the problem and vice versa" (Lukács cited by Goldmann in de Gandillac, et al., 1965:7)?

working through and understanding it (see Sartre 1963:170). In doing so, Lévi-Strauss becomes history's fool. He does not seem to realize that his proposed solution is not all that different from the myth he so eloquently criticizes. Subsuming a concrete human circumstance under a hypothetical and progressive teleology called historical totalization has nearly the same effect as reducing such circumstances to an equally hypothetical but regressive teleology called structural decomposition.

A very similar critique can be made of Lévi-Strauss's position on linguistic explanation and the problem of meaning. Here again, the point is not to deny the specific role of unconscious factors in language production nor to dismiss the semiological significance of structural analyses. Rather, the point is to reject the reductive and illogical results of Lévi-Strauss's particular interpretation. In the context of language, too, I think the assumption that a discontinuous science can nonetheless define a distant continuity is the crucial proposition to evaluate.[52]

Since I do not want to repeat what I have already covered, let me discuss only one issue: the question of hermeneutics. Lévi-Strauss, as we know, seeks to avoid the hermeneutic circle. An escape is made possible by the continuity Lévi-Strauss posits between the categories of an autonomous scientific thought (his own) and the elements of a hidden yet universal rationality.[53] Another continuity is thus bypassed: between the conditional founding of intersubjective understanding and the resultant production of intercommunicative meaning. For Lévi-Strauss, such a contextually specific, intentionally reflexive, and laborously circular via media is rendered unnecessary by the *a priori* assumption that interpersonal knowledge is unconditionally objective because it can be reduced to a shared structure between unconscious brains.

[52] Here again, Lévi-Strauss is simply not radical enough. Hence, his linguistic theories can be absorbed and transcended by a properly radical theory of meaning. Only the latter ". . . could afford an effective transition between surface meaning meant by the subject; the meaning of the situation in which he means; the meaning of his action, which may contradict his surface meaning; the reconstituted meaning of all this and the context of its reconstruction by the [anthropologist]; as well, finally, as the critical reconstruction of that theoretical practice of meaning, as contexturing and texturing of the [anthropological] text" (O'Malley 1972:69).

[53] I cannot here discuss the question of "concrete universals" (though it is, of course, crucial). For Lévi-Strauss, the concrete universal is a secondary embodiment of a preconstituted and synchronic entity: the unconscious brain (see Scholte 1966:1193ff). This position is incommensurate with both the phenomenological and dialectical points of view. Take, for instance, Merleau-Ponty. First, a citation from *Signs*: "If universality is attained, it will not be through a universal language which would go back prior to the diversity of languages to provide us with the foundations of all possible languages. It will be through an oblique passage from a given language that I speak and that initiates me into the phenomenon of expression, to another given language that I learn to speak and that effects the act of expression according to a completely different style — the two languages (and ultimately all given languages) being contingently comparable only at the outcome of this passage and only as signifying wholes, without our being able to recognize in them the common elements of one single categorical structure" (Merleau-Ponty 1960:87). Compare and contrast with Sebag (1965:165). In an excellent article Edie comments: "There is, therefore, an experi-

This is another and entirely gratuitous assumption. Intersubjective understanding (Rousseau's "the me is another" [see Lévi-Strauss 1963a]) is the hoped-for *result* of anthropological labor. It certainly cannot simply be anticipated by a theoretical definition of the unconscious: "the notion of reciprocity regarded as the most immediate form of integrating the opposition between self and other" (Lévi-Strauss 1969c:84). To know another "objectively" (assuming this is even possible!) is in situ and in practice a mediated and conditioned achievement. It is, in other words, a task or project (see Sartre 1963:91ff).[54]

As a situated and intentional project, anthropological praxis cannot simply assume that it is by definition autonomous from its own preconditions as a mediated enterprise. Nor can it merely posit a universal continuity by means of an analytic estrangement from its subjective-matter. If anthropology is to be an objective science that is continuous with reality in any significant way, it will have to be both reflexive and critical: reflexive in that the synthetic achievements of the knowing subject are recognized (see Scholte 1973c); critical because it examines "the nature of encountered phenomena *and* ... the nature of that encounter" (Fabian 1971:34).

Lévi-Strauss is neither reflexive nor critical in this sense. He is not reflexive because the concrete relation between self and other is avoided, reduced, or hypostatized (see Diamond 1973:2ff and Krader 1973:8). He is not critical because the epistemological process of self-objectification does not take place "*within* the system of relations of the observer and the observed" (Krader 1973:20; my emphasis).

Failing the critical reflexivity that only a dialectical theory of scientific praxis can offer, Lévi-Strauss's "project" is in danger of terminating in contemplative silence. Its reductive doctrine of physiochemical continuity can only be eradicated by a paradoxical leap of faith (given structuralism's own assumptions), by a poetic turn to discontinuous

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enced and 'existential' foundation for universality in language, but it is not that of the innate ideas of the Cartesians or the logical *a priories* of 'rational grammar.' It is rather the 'oblique' or 'lateral' universality of incomplete but sufficient comprehensibility that we effect in actually speaking to others" (Edie 1971:320). Finally, let me add that Merleau-Ponty's position is meant to apply to anthropology as a whole, not just to linguistics. Here again a quote from *Signs*: "The implications of a formal structure may well bring out the internal necessity of a given genetic sequence. But it is not these implications which make men, society, and history exist. . . . [The] process of joining objective analysis to lived experience is perhaps the most proper task of anthropology. . . . This provides a second way to the universal: no longer the overarching universal of a strictly objective method, but a sort of lateral universal which we acquire through ethnological experience and its incessant testing of the self through the other person and the other persons through the self" (Merleau-Ponty 1960:119–120).

[54] This process is, of course, historical as well. "Indeed, [the anthropologist] and his 'object' form a couple, each one of which is to be interpreted by the other, the *relationship* between them must itself be interpreted as a moment of history" (Sartre 1963:72; see also Scholte 1973b).

metaphors. The key to understanding this potential silence and the search for aesthetic metaphor lies, I believe, in Lévi-Strauss's cosmic desire to sever the relation between mundane experience and transcendant Reality and to favor the latter. As a result, sentient human beings are rejected and ejected from the science of anthropology.[55] But can or should anthropos ever be removed from anthropology? "When one is studying man, what can be more exact or more rigorous than *to recognize human properties in him*?" (Sartre 1963:157).

Reintroducing the situated human being into anthropological praxis will resurrect the critical and constitutive role of consciousness. It will also temper the structuralist passion for unconscious determinants in language, history, etc.[56] Structuralism must come to recognize that "in all the universe, man cannot find a well so deep that, leaning over it, he does not discover at the bottom his own face" (Kolakowski 1968:66). Consciousness, then, is *not* "the secret enemy of the human sciences" (Lévi-Strauss 1964:537). As Marx and even Freud recognized, it is the only critical tool we have (see Dufrenne 1968:126; Dufrenne in Leduc 1970:281; Sartre 1966; or Simonis 1967:32). Structuralism's obvious failure to appreciate this crucial insight condemns it to the status of a thought which cannot think itself (see Ricoeur in Lévi-Strauss 1970a:23).

Failure to think one's own preconditions (existential, social, historical, philosophical) is a fatal ethnological and normative flaw. Why? Because such preconditions in turn condition (make possible) the anthropologist's perception and understanding of ethnographic others (see Scholte 1972a). To these others — and ultimately to their right to fashion their own lives — the anthropologist owes a debt. At the very least, he owes them a self-understanding which their example in large part makes possible. Inversely, without such self-understanding, no genuine appreciation of their distinctive contributions is possible — except perhaps as ethnocentric echoes of how the anthropologist intends these others to serve

[55] Habermas has analyzed this phenomenon in the context of "scientism" generally. When the synthetic achievements of the knowing subject are *not* recognised, "*the meaning of knowledge itself becomes irrational* — in the name of rigorous knowledge" (Habermas 1971:69). In Lévi-Strauss's case, Diamond ties structuralism's irrationality to the failure to account for meaning: "The key to Lévi-Strauss's 'meaninglessness' is, I believe, in his rejection of self-knowledge, which is in turn the root paradox of modern anthropology. If self-knowledge is irrelevant, so is self-criticism" (Diamond 1972:407–408).

[56] I am aware of an important ommision in this discussion. Though I have touched on both language and history (however briefly), I have failed to mention the transition from nature to culture and my alternative suggestions about it. It will have to await another essay. I would venture to suggest, however, that it would be especially interesting to compare and contrast Marx and Lévi-Strauss on this score. How, for example, would the emphasis on the mediating role of the human mind in Lévi-Strauss differ from the attentiveness to the practical role of human praxis in Marx? (see Simonis 1968b). As we know, it is a topic of concern among structuralists, and it has been placed at the center of a Marxist problematic by a number of scholars, especially Schmidt (1971b). See also Pullberg in CCES (1968:134) and, of course, the work of Lukács.

(as stages in human evolution, as data for his analytic theories, or even as abstract models of what ought to be). Such ethnocentricity must at all times be avoided. Unlike the structuralist paradigm, a reflexive and critical anthropology attends to the enormous and difficult task of doing so.

A reflexive stance is, however, only the first step. To remain on this level (important as it is) is to invite charges of bourgeois idealism and leisured academic relativity. Such indeed appear to be the shortcomings of the phenomenological and hermeneutic alternatives to structuralism discussed in this essay. In the final analysis, the normative impotence of the phenomenological tradition (in turn the result of an insufficiently radical sociopolitical perspective) is as disabling as the decisive lack of critical reflexivity in the structuralist position.[57] Neither point of view provides the existential opening to Marxism that alone can fully join ethnographic experience with ethnological critique.

Are there, then, any compelling alternatives? I think there are, though at this time I can only clear some of the necessary ground for a properly critical, dialectical, normative, and emancipatory anthropology. I would suggest that Sartre's existential Marxism, not Lévi-Strauss's reductive structuralism, enables us to take the first important step. It does so by insisting that intellectual labor — anthropological praxis included — is a situated and a motivated activity. Sartre thus reunites dialectically what Lévi-Strauss severs analytically: the dynamic relation between human experience and scientific reality. As a situated activity, anthropological inquiry demands a constant and critical awareness of its own sociohistorical confines. As a motivated activity, anthropological praxis must seek to liberate us from the ethnocentric projections so often embedded in these confines and visited upon others in the form of exploitative ideologies (socioeconomic, political, theological).

As a historically situated and critically motivated praxis, cultural anthropology must once again entertain, as it did in the prophetic voices of Rousseau and Marx, a vision of human potential. Historical becoming must be the actualizing vehicle for that possibility. History did not always oppress; it "was the will of men before it became man's fate" (Diamond 1974:19). Societies in history, both in the past and in the future, have or may contain the concrete models and the humane alternatives so urgently required by oppressed and alienated men and women.[58] In this sense, "history implies exhortation, because it is confession, failure, and triumph. It is the measure of our capacity, the link between man and man,

[57] Empiricism, incidentally, offers no solution whatsoever. It is either impotent (facts are facts, not oughts) or conservative (facts are and ought to be).

[58] This is also how I would interpret Marx's assertion that: "Nothing can result at the end of a process that did not occur at its beginning as a prerequisite and condition. On the other hand, however, the result must contain all the elements of the process" (Marx 1971:78).

the key to ourselves" (Diamond 1974:119). In this sense, too, cultural anthropologists ". . . are engaged in a complex search for the subject in history, as the precondition for a minimal definition of humanity and, therefore, of self-knowledge as the ground for self-criticism. The questions we bring to history come out of our own need. The task of anthropology is to clarify these questions" (Diamond 1974:100). To attempt to escape from historical praxis, from the dialogical possibilities it holds and presupposes, is a dangerous illusion which implies the negation not only of anthropology but of culture, of human life.[59]

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[59] The very cunning of history offers some hope: "Spirit devours time, but time for its part can render judgment on an impotent spirit" (Habermas 1971:170).

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PART TWO

The Structuralist Constraint

Epistemological Comments on the Problems of Comparing Modes of Production and Societies

MAURICE GODELIER

Is it possible to speak of a single human nature in spite of — or perhaps because of — the great variety of economic systems, social relations, and ideologies that have emerged in the course of history and have been studied by anthropologists, historians, economists, and other social scientists?

Is it necessary, to answer this question, to go through the tedious process of comparing all societies with one another after having reduced them to a certain number of parameters and cultural traits? Must we decide in advance that this single human nature will correspond to the combination of traits which, at the end of this immense sifting process, would appear to be common to all societies? What, then, are we to do with the differences since they belong just as much to Man? Must we demonstrate that they are not what they seem, that they are in fact similarities which one has not discerned? The difficulty lies in the fact that appearances must be brought into question, for if appearances can be false, one might just as well find that all similarities are merely differences of which one is not aware.

The question is to determine both the location and the *nature* of the problem, and thus the *method* of treating it. We already have some idea of the location since we know that it is situated beyond the appearances of economic and social systems, in their hidden structures and the invisible laws of their operation. It also has to do with the reasons why these structures emerge and become articulated one with another to make up an entity, a society with only a limited capability of reproducing itself or of disappearing in history.

The method chosen must be distinguished from the customary procedures of functionalist empiricism for which social *structures* are merely the "arrangement" of *visible* social *relations*, this being their role within

an entity of which they constitute functionally complementary parts. Such a method must avoid the seemingly insoluble difficulties of classificational empiricism and, at the same time, allow one to explain both the similarities and the differences which exist between various economic and social systems or various structural levels in terms of a single set of factors. This method must be at least initially a structural analysis of the type which Lévi-Strauss uses in the study of kinship systems and systems of ideological representations associated with mythical thought. By this analysis, Lévi-Strauss was able to demonstrate that different kinship systems belonged to a single family of structures and obeyed identical laws of transformation. This was an irreversible gain in the human sciences.

Nevertheless — and this will allow us to clarify the nature of the problems which structural analysis has come up against — one must remember that his most striking results up to this time are the development of a morphology of the structures of social kinship relations and a morphology of American Indian myths. There is as yet no analysis of the specific functions which these kinship relations or these ideologies play in the real societies where they were found. Because of this lack of a "structural physiology," the problem of the conditions of reproduction or nonreproduction of these real societies, and thus the problem of their histories, has remained outside the field of theoretical analysis.

Of course, Claude Lévi-Strauss is not unaware of these problems. For him it is "as wearisome as it is useless to try to prove that any society is within history and that it changes; that is perfectly obvious" (1962a:310). He even hypothesizes that the way to approach the problem of explaining the transformation of societies lies in accepting as a "law of order" the "incontestable primacy of infrastructures" (1962a:173) among all the structures which make up a society. This, it would seem, is the basic determinant of the way in which societies function and evolve. It is in this perspective that he writes, regarding the myths of the Australian aborigines:

> We in no way wish to suggest that ideological transformations engender social transformations. *The reverse order alone is true.* The conception which men have of the relationships between nature and culture is a function of the manner in which their own social relations are modified. . . . We merely study shadows cast on the wall of the cave (1962a:155).

Thus, Lévi-Strauss joins Marx, whose fundamental thesis is that "the mode of production in material life determines the general character of the social, political, and spiritual processes of life. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but, on the contrary, their social existence which determines their consciousness" (Marx 1957:4). Lévi-Strauss himself affirms that in his work on myths and savage

thought, he wanted "to contribute to that theory of superstructures barely sketched by Marx" (Lévi-Strauss 1962a:198). Nevertheless, we also know that, in the conclusions of *From honey to ashes* (1973) regarding the fundamental historical revolution which has been christened "the Greek miracle" at the end of which, in ancient Greek society, "mythology gives way to a philosophy which emerges as the preliminary condition of scientific thought," Lévi-Strauss sees "a historical occurrence which has no meaning other than that it happened in that place and at that time." History is reduced here to the domain of "irreducible contingency" (1970:407–408), and, joining the functionalist empiricists, Lévi-Strauss is able to write: "let the historian deal with change and the ethnologist with structures" (1926b:45).

The problem is not one of denying the fact of contingency, but rather of discovering the reasons why structures, whatever the internal or external causes of the changes they undergo, can evolve only in a finite number of directions which depend on their immanent, unintentional properties.

The main point, in our view, is that both Marx and Lévi-Strauss seek to explain changes in social relations in terms of laws governing the relationships between economy, society, and history. In this respect Lévi-Strauss and Marx concur with the conclusions of the great specialist in economic anthropology, Raymond Firth, who after studying the Polynesian society of Tikopia Island for thirty years, wrote in the introduction to *Primitive Polynesian economy*:

> After publishing an account of the social structure, in particular the kinship structure (*We, the Tikopia*, London, 1936), I analyzed the economic structure of the society because so many social relations were made most manifest in their economic content. Indeed, the social structure, particularly the political structure, was clearly dependent upon specific economic relationships arising out of the system of control of resources. With these relationships, in turn, were linked the religious activities and institutions of the society . . ." (Firth 1964:xi).

In order to analyze societies and explain their functioning and history, we must, then — and Marx, Lévi-Strauss, and Firth coincide in this — give priority to relationships between economy and society. Of course, this means that we must first reconstruct theoretically the real economic infrastructure which characterizes a given society. It is not enough to say, as the classics did, that the economy of a society consists of the social relations, taken as a whole, which assure the production and circulation of the material means of its existence and reproduction, and then proceed to itemize the visible aspects of these social relations.[1] One must discover, beyond the apparent economic relationships, the real, though hidden, "mode of production" which characterizes the society. One must begin

[1] Compare my own critique of both formalist definitions (Robbins, Leclair, etc.) and substantivist definitions (Polanyi, Dalton) of economy (1966:234–239).

by questioning the appearances, as Marx did, showing that in the capitalist mode of production, wages "make the *real* relationships between capital and labour *invisible* and show precisely the opposite" (Marx 1957) since they conceal completely the fact that one person's profit comes from the unpaid work of another, the fundamental fact of the exploitation of the working class by the class which has a monopoly over money and the means of production.

> The finished form which economic relationships assume, such as it is *superficially* manifest, in its concrete existence, and thus also such as it is conceived of by the agents of these relationships and by those who embody them when they try to understand them, is very different from their essential but hidden *internal structure* and from the *concept which corresponds to it.* Indeed, it is even the reverse, the opposite (Marx 1957).

Is this to say that the study of the structural relationships between economy, society, and history coincides with what is today called "economic anthropology?" We do not think so for two reasons: on the one hand, because one must break with the erroneous interpretation of Marx on the question of the relationships between infrastructure and superstructure, and one must refrain from treating the analysis of economic relationships as an autonomous fetishized domain; on the other hand, because it is no longer possible, in this perspective, to oppose anthropology and history, and because a *single* science of man is emerging, beyond traditional disciplinary boundaries, which will provide both a *comparative* theory of social relationships, and an explanation of the *concrete* societies that have appeared in history. Let us again take up these various points.

In practice, anthropology was born of Europe's discovery of the non-Western world and the development of various forms of Western colonial domination over the world, ranging from early forms contemporaneous with the birth of capitalism to the imperialism of the twentieth century. Little by little, a field of study took shape, covering all the non-Western societies which the West discovered during its world-wide expansion; these the historians left to the anthropologists whenever they could not rely upon written archives to date the monuments and the material traces of past history and whenever it became necessary to resort to direct observation and oral inquiry.

At the same time, and for similar reasons, entire sections of Western history, ancient and modern, were abandoned to ethnology or to rural sociology (which were often confused with one another). To anthropology, thus, was ceded the study of all aspects of regional or village life which appeared to be survivals of precapitalist and preindustrial modes of production and social organization or which went back to very ancient ethnic and cultural characteristics, such as, for example, the Serbian

zadruga, the family organization of the southern Slavs, and Basque and Albanian customs. Such questions were only rarely discussed in the written documentation scrutinized by historians, and thus required direct field study of practices which most often formed part of oral traditions, folklore, and rules of custom. Moreover, the evolutionist idea, current in the nineteenth century, that European customs were survivals of ancient evolutionary stages which were still present or better preserved among non-Western peoples, strongly supported the view that these two areas of historical research should be left to anthropologists. Only anthropologists were thought to be capable of building up a complete and accurate picture of early European customs with the help of elements still present among exotic peoples (or the reverse, as the situation and necessity required); they alone would be able to reconstruct an accurate picture of the first stages of humanity, or at least of those of its representatives who had left no written history.[2]

But if anthropology was formed by the convergence of two sources of material abandoned by historians, it does not follow that history, viewed as a scientific discipline, is founded on theoretically more rigorous principles. In fact, one finds a similar lack of rigor in the way in which the scope of history was defined. On the one hand, it was long oriented exclusively toward Western realities, whence the narrowness of its comparisons. On the other hand, because many aspects of popular or local life hardly appeared in the written documents that historians studied, they had little choice but to view Western reality through the testimony of those who, in the West as elsewhere, have always used and controlled the practice of writing, that is, the cultured, dominant classes and the various state-controlled administrations (cf. Lefebvre 1971). Thus, anthropology is not, in principle, inferior to history (or vice versa); any attempt to evaluate them in terms of greater or lesser scientific objectivity, any tendency to disregard the way they were constituted and their respective real content can only transform them into fetishized domains, into theoretical fetishes in which scientific practice is alienated.

This discussion of the way in which the scope of history and anthropology was defined is indispensable for understanding two essential points. The first point concerns the enormous diversity of the societies and modes of production studied by anthropology. These range from the last bands of Bushmen hunting and gathering in the Kalahari desert to the tribes practicing horticulture on the high plateaux of New Guinea; from the opium-producing tribes working as mercenaries in Southeast Asia to the castes and subcastes of India, from the traditional African or Indonesian kingdoms and states which are today integrated into newly independent nations to vanished pre-Columbian empires which contem-

[2] This is what was done, independently, by the two founders of anthropology, E. B. Tylor (1865) and Lewis Henry Morgan (1877).

porary ethnohistory and archeology are trying to reconstruct; from the peasant communities of Mexico to those of Turkey, Macedonia, and Wales. These extremely diverse societies analyzed by anthropology have, it would seem, little in common and appear to be the results of historical development of different economic and social systems, responding to different rates of evolution through processes of transformation which little by little have almost entirely eliminated archaic modes of production in favor of other more dynamic and pervasive ones, of which the capitalist mode of production is one of the latest and most devastating examples. Let us not forget, for example, that since the beginning of the Neolithic period (9000 B.C.) hunting-gathering economies and societies have been gradually eliminated or driven into ecological zones unsuitable for agriculture and stock-raising and are today close to disappearing forever (cf. DeVore and Lee 1967), and that extensive forms of agriculture are in competition with the more intensive forms made necessary by the growth of population and the needs of mercantile production, as well as other factors.

The second point is that because of the way history and anthropology developed as disciplines, history has appeared to be the knowledge and science of civilization (identified, except for a few exceptions such as China, with the West), while anthropology has been the study of barbarians, of savages or of the rural populations of Europe that were still at an inferior stage of civilization. The relationship between anthropology and history has reflected the ideological prejudices which Western society and its dominant classes entertained about themselves and about the societies which gradually fell under their domination and exploitation. This includes the rural populations of the West, which have either been transformed into an industrial and urban proletariat or have had to abandon their former ways of life to adopt forms of economic and social organization compatible with production for a market under conditions of competition set by the criteria of capitalist economic "rationality."

Consequently, one understands why at a theoretical level anthropology has generated so many ambiguities and ideological fetishes and why it causes such discomfort at the practical level.

These givens show clearly the necessity of developing a theoretical approach which, on the one hand, will enable us to reconstruct the various modes of production that have developed in the course of history, using material brought to light by historians and anthropologists, and which, on the other hand, make it possible to identify and eliminate the ideological aspects of these materials. However, to develop such an approach and to go further in the analysis of the structural causality of economics, we must first deal with the common and erroneous conception of the relationship between economy and society.

Unlike some Marxists who often slip into vulgar materialism, it is my

contention that when Marx distinguished infrastructure and superstructure and stated that the profound logic of societies and of their history depended in the final analysis on the transformation of their infrastructure, he was simply highlighting for the first time a hierarchy of functional distinctions and of structural causalities without in the least prejudging either the *nature* of the structures which, in each case, take charge of these functions (kinship, politics, religion and so forth) or the *number of functions* which a structure can support. In order to discover this hidden logic, one must go beyond the structural analysis of the forms of social relations and thought, and attempt to reveal the "effects" of the structures one on another through various social processes, and gauge their real impact on the functioning and the reproduction of an economic and social formation. There are thus no grounds for refusing, as certain Marxists have done, to see relations of production in kinship relations, or, the reverse, to find in this fact an objection to or a refutation of Marx, as certain functionalists or structuralists have done. One must go beyond the morphological analysis of social structures in order to analyze their functions and the transformations of these functions and structures.

The fact that one structure can support several functions does not authorize one to confuse structural levels and disregard the fact of the relative autonomy of structures, that is, the autonomy of their internal properties. Marx's thought is not a kind of reductionist materialism which throws all reality back onto economics, or a simplistic functionalism which reduces all the structures of a society to that which appears at first sight to dominate it, whether this is kinship, politics, or religion. Starting from this distinction between functions and the relative autonomy of structures, one can correctly approach the problem of causality between one structure and another, between one level on the others. Now, insofar as one structure has *simultaneous* effects on all the structures which make up with it a distinctive society capable of reproducing itself, one must seek to discover, in different *places* and at different *levels* and thus with a *different content* and *form*, the presence of a *single* cause, that is, the necessary and simultaneous effects of a specific combination of unintentional properties of particular social relations. This is not to "reduce" some of the structures to others, but to highlight the different ways in which one of them can influence the functioning of all the others. Any metaphor which makes use of concepts such as container-contents or interior-exterior can only yield a distorted picture of these mechanisms which govern the intimate articulation and reciprocal action of structures.

A materialism which takes Marx as its point of departure cannot be solely a search for networks of structural causalities without eventually seeking to evaluate the relative importance of the various structures on the functioning, that is primarily on the conditions of *reproduction* of an economic and social formation. It is when analyzing the hierarchy of

causes which determine the reproduction of an economic and social formation, that such materialism takes seriously Marx's fundamental hypothesis, that the reproduction of this formation and of the modes of production which constitute its material and social infrastructure can be explained in terms of an ultimate determining causality. Of course, taking this hypothesis seriously does not mean transforming it into a dogma or an easy recipe, or into a spell-binding and deliberately terroristic discourse which hides the ignorance of its authors under a blanket denunciation of the failures of the "bourgeois" sciences. It would be enough to appreciate the number and the seriousness of the problems which arise as soon as one tries to compare societies whose subsistence is based on hunting and gathering, like those of the Boshiman, the Shoshone, and the Australian aborigines in order to show the derisory futility of such theoretical attitudes.[3]

In a word, whatever the nature of the internal or external causes and circumstances (such as the introduction of the horse into North America by the Europeans) which induce contradictions and structural transformations into a given mode of production and society, these contradictions and transformations always have their basis in the internal properties *immanent* to the social structures, and translate unintentional necessities whose reasons and laws must be discovered. It is in these unintentional properties and necessities that human intention and action are rooted and in which the impact of their social effects is felt most fully. If these structural transformations have any laws, they are not "historical" laws. In themselves, these laws do not change; they have no history. They are laws of transformation which refer to constants because they refer to the structural properties of social relationships.

Thus, history is not a category which explains, but which is explained. Marx's general hypothesis of the existence of a relationship between infrastructure and superstructure which ultimately determines the functioning and evolution of societies, does not permit *in advance* the determination of the specific laws governing the functioning and evolution of the various economic and social formations which have appeared or will appear in history. This is because, on the one hand, there is no such thing as general history and, on the other hand, one never knows in advance which structures function as infrastructure and superstructure within

[3] Compare the still current remarks of Engels, who wrote to Joseph Bloch on September 22, 1890: "According to the materialist conception of history, the ultimately determining element in history is the production and reproduction of real life. Neither Marx nor I have ever claimed more than this. Hence if somebody twists this into saying that the economic element is the *only* determining one, he transforms the proposition into a meaningless, abstract, senseless phrase. . . . Unfortunately, however, only too often people think they have fully understood a new theory and can apply it without more ado from the moment they have assimilated its main principles, and even those not always correctly. And I cannot exempt many of the more recent "Marxists" from this reproach, for the most amazing rubbish has been produced in this quarter, too" (1960:268–271).

these various economic and social formations. The epistemological horizon which we have just drawn thus appears as an open network of methodological principles whose practical application is, nevertheless, quite complex. Because of the open character of this horizon, theoretical thought is prevented from deteriorating into artificial totalizing syntheses. On the contrary, it allows us to mark, step by step, the gaps which appear everywhere in social theory and to sift out and expel the statements which seek to close these gaps in an illusory and ideological fashion.

To speak of such a theoretical approach as either history or anthropology would only be an abuse of language. Beyond the fetishistic partitions and arbitrary divisions of the human sciences, we are dealing here with *one* science of man which truly strives to explain his history, to project the past into the future, that is, to place history once again in the realm of the possible. "The possible," said Kierkegaard, "is the heaviest of categories" (1935:224) and we know well that the most difficult task of theoretical reason, as of practical action, is to survey and to analyze the possibilities which coexist at each instant.

As long as we do not know how to reconstruct, by scientific thought, the limited number of possible transformations which can be accomplished by a specific structure or a specific combination of structures, history, both yesterday's and tomorrow's, will burden us with an immense mass of facts which press down with all the weight of their enigmas and their consequences.

Such is, in our view, the epistemological context in which the task of discovering, reconstructing, and comparing the modes of production which have developed or are still developing in history must be carried out. We see why this task involves something other than creating an economic anthropology, an economic history, or any other discipline which will be similarly christened. Before us stretches a road which originated somewhere either beyond, or on this side of, functionalism and structuralism and which leads elsewhere — that is, toward the possibility of bringing out and studying the "action of structures" upon each other and, more specifically, that of the various modes of production which have appeared in history. We will not limit ourselves, however, to merely indicating the way, we will try, in a final section, to give a clearer idea of the type of results to which it leads. To that end, we will summarize a long study which we have devoted to the mode of production and the social organization of the Mbuti pygmies of the Congo, based on Colin Turnbull's work, which is of exceptional quality and density.[4] This summary cannot do justice to the richness of the discussion or the complexity of the facts, but it is sufficient for our purpose, which is to point to a method of

[4] We refer here to the whole of Colin Turnbull's work, particularly to *Wayward servants* (1966).

analyzing the causality of economic structures, the results of which would, little by little, make rigorous comparisons of societies and their institutions possible.

CASE STUDY: THE ECONOMY AND SOCIETY OF THE MBUTI PYGMIES OF THE CONGO

The Mbuti pygmies live in the heart of a generalized ecosystem of the simple type,[5] the equatorial forest of the Congo, and practice hunting and gathering. They use the bow and the net for hunting and their prey consists principally of various varieties of antelopes, and occasionally elephants. The women collect mushrooms, tubercles, and other wild plants, as well as molluscs, and contribute more than half of the food resources. Honey is gathered once a year and its collection is the occasion for each band to split into smaller groups which reunite at the end of the honey season. Hunting is collective. The married men spread their individual nets end to end in a semicircle about thirty meters long, and the women and unmarried children chase the prey toward the nets. These activities are repeated almost every day, and in the evening the products of the hunt and of the gathering are shared and consumed by all the members of the camp. Each month, as the prey becomes scarcer around the camp, the band moves to another site, but always within a single territory which is known and respected by neighboring bands. Kinship and family relationships, as such, play a secondary role in production for the work is divided between the sexes and between generations. Individuals frequently leave the band in which they were born and go to live in neighboring bands, sometimes permanently. The exchange of wives is practiced and individuals seek a spouse in distant bands, never in the band from which their mother or father's mother came. The bands have no chief and, depending on circumstances, authority is shared between the generations and sexes although the old people and the best hunters enjoy a greater authority than the other members of the band. War is not practiced between bands, and murders or violent acts are extremely rare within bands. Female puberty and the death of adults, men or women, are accompanied by rituals including the Elima festivities in the first case, and the Molimo festivities in the second, in which the forest is the object of an intense cult and "makes its voice heard" through the intermediary of sacred flutes. There are between seven and thirty hunters and their families in a band for hunting is not effective with less than seven nets and if there were more than thirty hunters there would not be enough meat to

[5] That is, one containing a large number of plant and animal species which themselves include a limited number of individuals. Compare the David S. R. Harris's paper (1969).

feed everyone regularly. The organization of hunting with nets, which is practiced without a true leader, would then have to be modified.

When one analyzes these economic and social relationships closely, one sees that the very conditions of production determine three constraints that are internal to the mode of production itself, and that these constraints contain the conditions for the reproduction of this mode of production, and express the limits on the possibilities of its reproduction. The first constraint is a constraint on "dispersion" of the groups of hunters and on the minimum and maximum limits on their numbers. The second constraint is a constraint of "cooperation" among individuals according to their age and sex in the process of production and the practice of hunting with nets. The third constraint is a constraint of "fluidity" and "nonclosure" or, to use Turnbull's expression, of maintaining a state of permanent "flux" among the bands. By "flux" is understood the rapid and frequent variation in the size and social composition of the bands.

These three constraints express the *social* conditions of the reproduction of the process of production, given the nature of the productive forces (specific techniques of hunting and gathering) and the nature of the biological conditions of reproduction of the plant and animal species which make up the generalized ecosystem of the Congolese equatorial forest. These constraints form a system; that is, each one is related to the others. The second constraint, for example, the constraint of cooperation among individuals according to their sex and age to ensure their own existence and reproduction and that of their band, takes on a specific form also through the operation of the first constraint, since the size of a band must be maintained within certain limits, and through that of the third constraint, since the need to maintain the bands in a state of flux constantly modifies the size of the groups and their social composition, that is, the ties of kinship, alliance, or friendship among those who are called to cooperate each day in the process of production and in the process of dividing up the products of the hunt and the gathering. One could equally show, as one indeed should, the effects of the first and second constraints on the third and of the second and third on the first. Let us note further that these constraints (particularly those of dispersion and of flux) are such that the social conditions for reproduction of individuals and of a band are at the same time the conditions for reproduction of Mbuti *society* as a whole, and as a whole which is present in all its parts. Thus, these are conditions *internal* to each band and at the same time conditions that are *common to all* the bands and permit the reproduction of the socio-economic system as a *whole.*

These three constraints thus form a system which develops out of the very process of production whose material and social conditions of reproduction it expresses. And this system is itself at the origin of a certain

number of *simultaneous* structural effects on all other instances of Mbuti social organization, effects which we shall only mention here because to go any further would take too long. These effects determine *the content and form* of those instances that are *compatible* with the constraints which ensure the very reproduction of the mode of production of the Mbuti. Thus, these constraints, which are internal to the mode of production, are at the same time the channels through which the mode of production determines, in the final analysis, the nature of the various instances of Mbuti society. Since the effects of these constraints are exerted simultaneously on all instances by the action of this system of constraints, the mode of production determines the *relationship* and the *articulation* of all these instances, one with another and in relation to itself, that is, it determines the general *structure* of the society as such and the specific form and function of each one of those instances which make it up. To seek to discover the system of constraints that are determined by a social process of production and constitute the social conditions of its reproduction means to proceed epistemologically in such a way as to be able to highlight the structural causality of the economy on the society and, at the same time, the specific general structure of that society, its overall logic. The causality of the economy, the general structure of the society, and the specific overall logic are never directly observable; they are facts which must be reconstructed by thought and scientific practice. The proof of the "truth" of this reconstruction can only be found in the capacity which it offers for explaining all the observed facts, and for posing new questions to the researcher in the field, questions which will require new inquiries and new procedures in order to find answers. That is the way in which advances in scientific knowledge can be achieved.

We believe that on the basis of the presentation and analysis of this system of constraints, it is possible to account for all the *major* facts observed and recorded in the works of Schebesta and of Turnbull.

The constraint of dispersion is the basis for explaining the constitution of *distinct* territories (Turnbull 1966:149), while the constraint of flux, of the bands' "nonclosure" is the basis for explaining the absence of *exclusive* rights within their respective territories (1966:174). What is fixed is not the internal composition of the bands but the existence of a *stable* relationship *between* bands, and thus a relationship which reproduces itself and permits the reproduction of each of these bands. What we can explain here, then, is the reason for the *form* and the *content* of the social relations of property and the use of this fundamental resource which is the territory for hunting and gathering, that portion of nature set up as a "primitive storehouse of provisions" and a "laboratory of means of production" (Marx). What we wish to stress here is that the customary rules and laws for the appropriation and use of nature are rooted in the very process of production. Now, to highlight this fact without reference

to the conscious norms of social practice of the agents of production which operate within a given mode of production, is a fundamental step in Marx's method, but one which is usually either completely neglected or caricatured by Marxists.[6] On this point we would agree with Bettelheim's comment (n.d.) about the confusion which has reigned in the theory and practice of economists and leaders in socialist countries over the juridical aspect and the real content of relations of production.

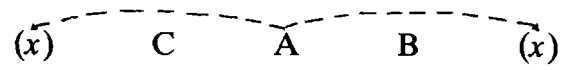
The sphere of the "juridical" extends considerably beyond the domain of the norms of action of individuals and groups as regards their hunting and gathering territory and their means of production, but we cannot dwell on this point; we will briefly analyze the structural effects of the mode of production on the kinship relations of the Mbuti. Here again, the facts and the norms are in accord with the structure of the mode of production and with the constraints which it imposes, particularly the third constraint of "nonclosure" of the bands and the maintenance of a structure of flux between them. The terminology of kinship insists above all on differences in generation and sex, which reproduce the forms of cooperation in the process of production (second constraint). If we analyze alliances we note above all that the preference for marriage in distant bands and the prohibition of marriage in the band from which one's mother or the mother of one's father came are positive and negative norms in accord with the third constraint, for they prevent the tendency for groups to become *closed* units exchanging wives in a *regular* and *guided manner*; by taking a wife from the band of my mother or my grandmother, I would reproduce the marriage of my father and/or my grandfather and thus reproduce old relationships; this would give *permanence* to the relationships between bands, linked in each generation by the exchange of wives which is necessary for the reproduction of the society and of each band as such. Moreover, by simultaneously prohibiting marriage between persons from neighboring bands in adjacent territories, it is made still more difficult for closed bands to emerge (third constraint).

Thus, the first and third constraints act on the modalities of alliance and explain the fact that marriage is above all a matter of exchange between nuclear families and individuals (Turnbull 1966:110) which preserves the fluid structure of the bands. At the same time, this explains why the band as such intervenes only in order to regulate the residence of the new couple. This is of great importance, since it is only at his marriage that a young man is given a net made by his mother and maternal uncle and is allowed to participate fully as a hunter and thus as a full-fledged agent of production in the reproduction of the band (second constraint) (1966:141). The relative weakness of the collective control on the indi-

[6] With the notable exception of works like those of Roy Rappaport (1968).

vidual (third constraint) and on the couple explains the precariousness of marriage among the Mbuti (1966:132).

The structural effects of the mode of production on consanguineous relationships complement those that affect marriage. The Mbuti, as has been admirably shown by Turnbull, have in fact no organization by lineage. It is through error or clumsiness that one speaks of "segments" of lineage when one wants to designate groups of brothers who live in the same band. The fact that there are no regular and directed matrimonial exchanges between bands such that each generation follows the direction taken by its ancestors and reproduces it, prevents continuity and hinders the formation of consanguineous groups of great genealogical depth, preoccupied with ensuring their continuity across their necessary segmentations. At the same time, let us note that at least four bands must exist in order for the society to reproduce itself through matrimonial exchanges: band A of Ego, band B which his mother came from, band C which his father's mother came from, and band x where he will find his spouse, and regarding which we know that it must not be an adjacent band.



Methodologically it is easy to see how wrong it would be to think that one could understand how a society functions on the basis of an inquiry into a single band or local unit. The constraints posed by the mode of production give rise to other effects which appear as soon as one analyzes the political relationships which exist between bands or within them. These effects are *different* in their content because they are exerted on a different instance which cannot be reduced to the elements of the process of production. But they are isomorphic with the effects produced on the other instances of Mbuti society. This isomorphism emerges because all these different effects spring from the *same* cause which acts simultaneously upon all levels of the society. Our approach to structural analysis within the framework of Marxism, as opposed to vulgar cultural materialism or the Marxism of certain individuals, does not *reduce* the various instances of a society to the economy. Neither does it represent the economy as the only true reality of which all other instances are only fantastic effects. Our manner of practicing Marxism fully takes into account the specificity of all instances, and thus their relative autonomy.

Two traits characterize the rules and the political practice of the Mbuti pygmies: (a) the slight inequality of political status and authority between individuals, men and women, and between generations, the old, the adults, and the young. Inequality exists and favors the adult men over the women and the old men over individuals, both men and women, of

younger generations; (b) the systematic avoidance of violence and collective repression as a means of regulating conflicts between individuals and between bands.

In the first case, as soon as inequality threatens to develop — for example, when a great elephant hunter wants to transform his prestige as a hunter into authority over the group — the institutional response is derision and public jeering, in short, systematic erosion of any attempt to develop inequality beyond certain limits compatible with the voluntary and strictly provisional (third constraint) cooperation (second constraint) of the individuals in a band. In the second case, the response to any conflict which *seriously* threatens the unity of the band or the relationships between bands is the systematic recourse to compromise or to diversion. In each band one individual plays the role of buffoon (Colin Turnbull unwittingly played this role during the first months of his stay among the Mbuti) and takes it upon himself to defuse serious conflicts which could lead to violent behavior or even murder and thus to a split in the band, or which threaten the internal harmony necessary to continued cooperation and reproduction (second constraint). In order to defuse conflicts the buffoon systematically sets up diversionary situations. If two individuals, A and B, confront each other seriously because one has committed adultery with the spouse of the other and their confrontation threatens to degenerate into physical violence and murder, the buffoon artificially inflates the importance of a minor conflict which opposes other individuals, C and D, for example; after several hours of shouts and disputes, A and B find themselves in the same camp against D, and as a result their own conflict loses some of its intensity. In only two circumstances does the band practice repressive violence: on the one hand, when a hunter secretly places his individual net in front of the other hunters' nets placed end to end and appropriates for himself an undue share of the prey, thus using the common effort of the whole band to his own advantage; and on the other hand, when during a Molimo festival in honor of the forest, a man falls asleep and forgets to sing the sacred chants in unison with the others at the moment when the forest answers the men's appeal and makes its voice heard through the intermediary of the sacred flutes which are carried into the camp by young people.

In both cases, the thief and the sleeping man have broken the internal solidarity of the group and threaten its real and imaginary conditions of reproduction (second constraint). In both cases, the guilty one is abandoned, alone and unarmed, in the forest where he soon dies unless the band which has exiled him comes for him. Thus, to the forest is entrusted the task of ultimately sanctioning major violations of the rules of social reproduction of the band. While it is really the band which has put the guilty one to death, everything happens as if it were the forest which was punishing him. Here we have a process of fetishization of social relation-

ships, that is, of inverting the meaning of causes and effects, a process which we will come back to when we analyze the religious practice of the Mbuti's cult of the forest.

Violence is also avoided in conflicts between bands, and all observers have been struck by the absence of war among the pygmies. If a band captures game on the territory of another band it sends part of the meat to the members of that band and conflict is regulated by such compromise and sharing. Why is war absent from the political practice of the Mbuti? Because it entails oppositions which would tend to crystallize the groups along rigid lines, to exclude other groups from using a territory and the resources it offers, to swell or depopulate the triumphant or vanquished groups, and to break the fragile balances necessary for the reproduction of each band and of the entire society. Thus, war is incompatible with the first, second, and third constraints of the mode of production, taken both separately and in their relations with each other. For the same reasons, sorcery is not practiced among the Mbuti, for sorcery presupposes relations of suspicion, fear, and hatred among individuals and groups and prohibits harmony and the collective and continued cooperation of the members of the band. To go into this further would lead us too far afield, for we should have to compare the Mbuti hunters with their neighbors, the agricultural Bantus who practice sorcery extensively.

One could push the analysis much further in order, for example, to account for all the reasons why the existence of "big-men" enjoy great individual authority over their band, or the existence of a permanent and centralized political hierarchy are incompatible with the conditions of reproduction of the mode of production. The opportunity that individuals have of leaving a band at any moment to join another, the nonexistence of lineal kinship relations or of continuity in marriages — all these factors converge to prevent authority from becoming concentrated in the hands of a single individual who would eventually transmit it to his descendants. This would result in the formation of a hierarchy of political power, benefiting a group defined in terms of kinship or lineage. At this stage of the discussion, our aim is to highlight the specific effects of each instance and the way in which they combine with the effects of constraints intrinsic to the mode of production, the effect, for example, of the content and form of Mbuti nonlineal kinship relations on the social forms of authority which combine with the direct effects which the mode of production can have on all political relationships (absence of war, fluidity of individual membership in bands, etc.). What we have here is the complex epistemological problem of analyzing the reciprocal effects, be they convergent or divergent, mutually reinforcing or tending to cancel each other out, of all instances on the basis of their specific relationship, of their *general articulation* as determined in the final analysis by the mode of production. And this analysis is absolutely necessary to explain the con-

tent, the form, and the function of the religion of the Mbuti, which dominates their ideology and symbolic practice.

We must now restrict ourselves to allusions that are barely understandable. Among the Mbuti, religious practice takes the form of a cult of the forest. This cult is practiced daily and is present in all their activities, in the morning when leaving for the hunt, in the evening when they return, and before sharing the game. Exceptional circumstances in the life of individuals or bands such as births, female puberty, or deaths, are the occasion for rituals, of which the most important are the Elima festival for female puberty and the great Molimo festival at the death of a respected adult. In cases of epidemic, repeated bad hunting, or serious accidents, the band performs "small Molimos." In all these circumstances of individual and collective life, the Mbuti turn to the forest and honor it through dance and, above all, through song.

For the Mbuti, the forest is "everything" (Turnbull 1966:251–253). It is the sum of all the animate and inanimate beings that are found there, and this reality, which transcends individuals and local bands, exists as a person, a divinity, whom one addresses in the terms which designate father, mother, friend, and even lover. The forest isolates and protects from the Bantu villagers, lavishes gifts of game and honey, chases away sickness, and punishes the guilty. It is life. Death befalls men and living beings when the forest has fallen asleep. It must be awakened (Turnbull 1966:262) so that it will continue to lavish food, good health, understanding, in short, happiness and social harmony upon the Mbuti no matter which band an individual belongs to. The affirmation of the Mbuti's dependence on and confidence in the forest culminates in the great Molimo ritual which is held at the death of a respected adult. Every day, sometimes for a month, the band hunts more intensely than usual, and the game captured is more abundant. It is shared and consumed during a feast followed by dances and chants which last almost until the next morning. The voice of the forest calls the Mbuti to new hunts and new dances. Woe to anyone who does not wake up because of the previous night's festivities when this voice makes itself heard and the sacred trumpets enter the camp on the shoulders of the strong young people. The guilty one who has broken communication with the forest can be immediately put to death. Otherwise he may be abandoned alone in the forest which will punish him and let him die. We have here the isomorphism of the two cases of repression. Not to hunt with everyone else and not to sing with everyone else is to break the cooperation and unity necessary to the band for the reproduction of its real and imaginary conditions of existence (second constraint).

Thus, on the one hand, the forest represents the supralocal reality, the natural ecosystem within which the pygmies reproduce themselves as a society and, on the other hand, the sum of the conditions for the material

and social reproduction of their society (the forest as a divinity providing game, good health, social harmony). The religion of the Mbuti is thus the ideology in which the conditions of reproduction of their mode of production and their society are represented; but these conditions are represented here in a *reversed*, fetishized, or mythical fashion. It is not the hunters who hunt the game, but the forest which offers them a certain quantity of game to catch so that they will be able to subsist and reproduce. Everything happens as though it were part of a relationship between persons of different power and status, since unlike men, the forest is omnipresent, omniscient, and omnipotent. Men show attitudes of recognition, love, and respectful friendship to it. It is the forest which they are respecting when they refrain from killing animals for no reason or from destroying plant and animal species. (This is the expression, at the level of consciousness, of the first constraint and of the conditions of renewal of the process of hunting and gathering certain natural species.) But the religion of the Mbuti is not only a system of representation. It is also a social practice which plays a fundamental role in the very reproduction of the society.

Does our method offer the possibility of constructing a theory of fetishization of social relationships, of going beyond the various kinds of ideological, religious, or political fetishisms, and approaching the question of symbolic practices in a scientific manner? In the past these questions have been very poorly treated by materialists, whether Marxists or cultural ecologists.[7] Sometimes these realities are even ignored.[8] They are usually studied from an idealistic perspective, which may be functionalist, as in Turner's work, or structuralist. The relationships between the symbolic practices of a society and its mode of production are almost never explored, for idealism cannot bring them out or reconstruct them, although it can and does repudiate them in a dogmatic manner. This is one of the major theoretical problems whose solution will help to make it possible to explain the conditions and the reasons for the birth of class society and of the state and thus the historical movement which has led to the disappearance of most classless societies. We will try to show, by means of an example, how to approach the analysis of the relationship between symbolic practice and mode of production in order to highlight the function of symbolic practice in the reproduction of social relationships taken as a whole.

The example is that of the Mbuti's great Molimo ritual which may last up to a month when a respected adult dies. As indicated earlier, hunting is carried on very intensively during the Molimo and the captured game is

[7] By Claude Meillassoux, for example, in an article (1968) in which he deals with Colin Turnbull's work.

[8] With the exception of the work of Marc Augé, P. Althabe, and P. Bonnafé (see Bonnafé 1969).

generally much more abundant than usual. Religious practice thus implies an intensification of the process of production which makes it possible to increase the quantity of game available for sharing. This gives rise to an intensification of the sharing process and culminates in exceptional consumption, which transforms the evening meal into a feast and ordinary life into a festival culminating in dances and group chanting. By these means the Mbuti communicate with the forest and make it "rejoice" thus calling onto themselves its favors and its protective presence, which brings abundant game, good health and safety from disease, scarcity, discord, and death. The Molimo ritual thus constitutes a symbolic labor which aims, in Turnbull's words, "to recreate life and society, to fight the forces of hunger, discord, immorality, inequality, and death" and which expresses "the dominant preoccupation of the Mbuti, which is to perpetuate, not individuals or lineages but the band and the Mbuti as such." As a result of more intense hunting and the abundance of game to share, cooperation and reciprocity are intensified and exalted; the tensions inside the group diminish and drop to their lowest level or are temporarily forgotten, although they do not disappear altogether. At the same time, the dancing and the polyphonic chanting imply the participation and union of all individuals. In short, in all its material, political, ideological, emotional, and aesthetic aspects, religious practice sustains the positive aspects of social relations and makes it possible to greatly attenuate and, provisionally, to mute (without resolving) the contradictions in these social relations. Religious practice thus constitutes a veritable social *labor* upon *contradictions* that develop out of the structure of the mode of production and of other social relations, a labor which is one of the essential conditions for the reproduction of these relations. Far from being unrelated to the material base and the mode of reproduction, as certain idealists would have it, religious practice is, at one and the same time, a material practice and a political practice, and is situated at the center of the process of reproduction of this mode of production. But, here again, the social practice is represented "in reverse" and lived in a "fetishized" fashion, because restored harmony, exceptional mutual understanding, abundance, and happiness, all of which are the product of more intense cooperation, greater reciprocity, and the deeper emotional communion which come out of the very relations which prevail among men in these exceptional circumstances, are said to result from the nearer presence and greater generosity of the forest, the imaginary being which personifies the unity of the group and the very conditions of its reproduction.

Thus, the religion of the Mbuti is not a domain of fantastic shadows projected on their consciousness by the reality of their social relations in the production of the material means of their existence. Far from being the phantasmagorical and passive reflection of a reality which resides

elsewhere, these representations and the religious practice associated with them draw their substance and their effectiveness from their presence at the interface where their mode of production articulates with the instances which correspond to it. While apparently turned toward imaginary beings and relations that are without material foundation, they point in fact to the most distant depth, the most secret interior of their society, to the invisible force which binds their various social relations into a whole capable of reproducing itself, that is, into a society.

What is really being apprehended, what appears in the form of the attributes of the forest, is in fact this invisible binding force; and it is upon it, that is to say upon themselves, upon the political and ideological conditions of the reproduction of their society that the Mbuti are acting when they seek to mute the tensions and contradictions created by the very structure of their social relations. That is why they come together to perform the ritual gestures, to hunt, to sing and dance, and celebrate the forest, source of all good things and vigilant protector of the Pygmies, their children and their future.

In this context, religion is a theory and a practice directed toward the point where social relations are articulated to make up a society capable of reproducing itself. At the same time, when it enters the realm of consciousness and opens up possibilities of action, this articulation gives rise to theoretical misinterpretations and becomes an illusory objective for practical action. In its mode of presentation, the invisible articulation of social relations is simultaneously present and hidden from view, and it becomes a source of human alienation, a place where the real relations among men and among things are presented upside down, in a fetishized manner.

Here, on the threshold of religion and symbolic practice, we bring to a close this demonstration of the theoretical possibilities offered by the systematic application of the method which we propose for exploring the relationships between economy, society, and history. Such methods can be used to reconstruct the foundations, the forms and the channels of causality that are associated, through the systems of constraints which they engender and which condition their reproduction with the various modes of production that have developed or are developing in history.

It is only by exploring the domain of the "causality" of structures that we will be able at the same time to explain "real societies" which structural morphological analysis cannot do, and to compare them, which empirical functionalist analysis cannot do. It is only by starting, little by little, from the theoretical results obtained in each case that rigorous comparative analysis of societies, an analysis "guided" by a new problematic, will be constructed. Thus, starting from our analysis of the kinship and political relations of the Mbuti bands, the question arises of discovering under what conditions kinship groups are constituted with

closed contours and operating with *regular and oriented* exchanges of wives, such as is the case in the systems by halves, by sections, or by subsections among the Australian aborigines who are hunters and gatherers like the Mbuti. In what conditions do truly segmentary societies appear within which, instead of the discontinuity of generations and the fluidity of social relations characteristic of the Mbuti or the Bushmen, there are groups closed on themselves and founded on the continuity of generations and the permanence of social relations?

We may note that if, instead of an irregular exchange of wives among at least four bands with nonclosed contours, one had a regular exchange among four exchanging bands with closed contours, we would create a kinship system of the four-section Australian type. The method for a general reexamination of the problems of anthropology can only be a method which proceeds by constructing transformation matrices.

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Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose: *The Dilemma of the French Structural Marxists*

DOUGLAS E. GOODFRIEND

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

Structure and Change Among the French Structural Marxists

The Marxist position[1] on sociocultural transformation as retailed by Althusser/Balibar[2] and Godelier is adapted to mechanistic cybernetics and Lévi-Straussean structuralism. The versions of the Marxist position adopted by Althusser/Balibar and Godelier are almost identical but there are certain differences with reference to the role of the individual in history and the influence of the economic domain in other domains. This will become clear as the analysis unfolds.

The classic Marxist formulation of the nature of intrasystemic relations goes back to Marx and Engels' distinction between infrastructure and superstructure and their famous statements on the role of the economy in social order and process (see, for example, the Preface to Marx; Engels 1890; Marx n.d.: vol. 1, pp. 714–715; Engels 1973:191). Both Althusser and Godelier elaborate in some detail the character of this articulation.

Althusser distinguishes between relations of dominance and relations of determination, and appropriates the notion of "determination in the last instance" by the economy. This means that the economic basis of a

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[1] I must stress here that I am not intending to explicate what I think Marx said about social change. I only wish to analyze some of his ideas as interpreted by Althusser, Balibar and Godelier. Due to time and space limitations I will not cover Meillassoux, Rey or Terray in this essay.

[2] For the most part Althusser and Balibar will be treated as a single unit. Balibar is a student of Althusser. When referred to individually in this essay, it is merely meant to note which of the two made the statement.

sociocultural system always determines which domain of that system will be dominant and play the pivotal role in determining the hierarchical order of articulation of all other domains (parts of the whole). Thus one part of the whole ultimately determines the ordering of all the other parts and the rise to dominance of one of them (Althusser 1970:11–113, 213; Althusser and Balibar 1970:97, 99, 216–218, 224). There is an attempt to integrate this hierarchy model with a closed-loop mechanistic feedback model in which all domains condition each other, and the structure of the whole affects the internal and external relations of the parts. Althusser develops this part of his theory under his notion of "structural causality," also considered as the "over-determination" of each part of the whole (Althusser and Balibar 1970:186–188, 241, 310; Althusser 1970:100–101, 106–107, 113, 206, 209). In this aspect of the theory, the structure of the whole determines the nature and role of the parts. This stands in contrast to the first consideration of the model in which one dominant part determined the ordering of all other parts (see especially Althusser and Balibar 1970:224).

Clearly, the Althusser/Balibar attempt to integrate a Marxist version of control hierarchy theory with a cybernetic feedback model is incomplete, leaving hazy some fundamental issues concerning the relations of wholes and parts. Their structural causality loses its systemic force in competition with an ultimate, linear economic determinacy. That is, the relation of hierarchy to feedback is poorly developed (see especially Althusser 1970:206–207). This is part of the larger problem of the relative autonomy of domains which nevertheless are said to mutually determine or condition one another.

Althusser, influenced by Lacan's neo-Freudianism, uses a mirror metaphor to explain the participation of the economic base in all the other domains of its sociocultural system. This is expressed in terms of the "reflection in contradiction itself of its conditions of existence . . . in society, the economy" (Althusser 1970:209; see also Althusser 1970:206–210 and Althusser and Balibar 1970:179). On the economic domain Althusser writes

> . . . the only way to the essence of the economic is to construct its concept, i.e., to reveal the site occupied in the structure of the whole by the region of the economic, therefore to reveal the articulation of this region with other regions (legal-political and ideological superstructure), and the degree of presence (or effectivity) of the other regions in the economic region itself. . . . Not only is the economic a structured region occupying its particular [sic] in the global structure of the social whole, but even in its own site, in its (relative) regional autonomy, it functions as a regional structure and as such determines its elements (Althusser and Balibar 1970:179–180).

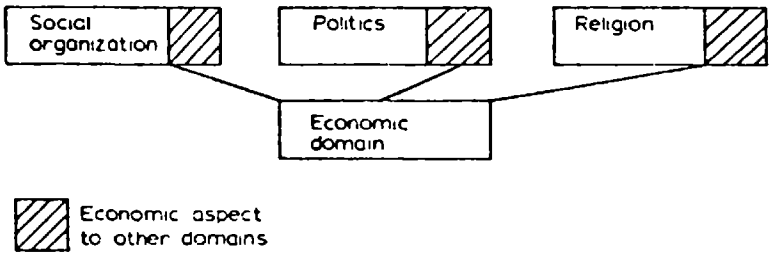
Apart from suggesting the diffuse nature of domains beyond their "sites" and into the economic "site," this metaphor does not specify the sets of

relations among various domains. The explicit geographic metaphor gives the sense of domains as pieces of real estate (sites), the buildings on which (structures) are metaphysically reproduced in part or whole on other pieces of property (particularly other domains appearing in the economic "region," and the economic domain's determinations appearing as condensing contradictions in any domain (see especially Althusser 1970:215). While one can dismiss the metaphor, the theoretical problem is real: what is the relation between diversified human activities and their institutionalized structures of thought and action, and more importantly what is the relation among these relations, i.e. what is the effect of system on structure? It appears then that structural causality with its mirroring metaphor conceals rather than answers the more fundamental questions about the exact relations between domains. Furthermore, as it is used in Althusser's model, structural causality actually has the same tautological explanatory power as did "human nature," "instinct," or "drives" for eighteenth- and nineteenth-century sociology and psychology: a change in structure is explained with reference to its immanent necessity. Such a model of inherent necessity and surface conflict, reminiscent of Hobbes, earns our instant suspicion.

Maurice Godelier's approach to intrasystemic relations is very similar to Althusser's at this level of analysis. Relying on the same metaphor, he uses a sectionally reflectionist model to situate the economic base outside its own domain, such as in kinship systems, where it is a "particular aspect of all non-economic activities" (Godelier 1972:23). Relative to "archaic society" Godelier writes:

> We need in fact to analyse more closely these kinship relations, for if they determine the places occupied by individuals in production, their rights to land and goods, their obligations in respect to work and gifts, etc., then they *function* as production-relations, just as they function as political, religious, etc., relations. Kinship is thus here *both* infrastructure and superstructure . . . the determining role of the economy, apparently contradicted by the dominant role of kinship, is rediscovered in this dominant role, since kinship functions as, *inter alia*, production-relations. Here the relationship between economy and kinship appears as an internal relationship *without* the economic relationships of the kinsfolk *merging*, for all that, with their political, sexual, etc., relationships (1972:93–95).

Diagrammatically, this model might look something like this:



For Godelier, the economic domain is at once both an independent site and an "aspect" or, as Althusser would say, a "presence" in other domains (Godelier 1972:23, 27, 94n; and Godelier 1967:112). Like Althusser, Godelier has it both ways: other domains are contained within the economic, and the economic appears within other domains. And like Althusser's structural causality, Godelier's structural causality and "function as" statements address the issue but do not fully resolve it. Thus, Godelier's model is susceptible to the same criticisms as Althusser's, including the problems of explanation via immanent necessity (cf. Godelier 1972:81, 83, 85). Furthermore, both models begin in the first moment of analysis with separate sites or domains which in the second moment of analysis must be somehow articulated with one another. This would seem to retain the categories of our bourgeois sociocultural system at a metalevel of analysis. Most significantly, it distorts indigenous cultural logics and their meaningful organization of thought, behavior, and institutions. As Marshall Sahlins recently pointed out, in his analysis of Terray's work, the vulgar Marxist importation of the centrality of "modes of production" into tribal cultures not only deforms the indigenous system, but is reduced to an argument for technological determinism (Sahlins, 1976:8n, 17). Both Althusser and Godelier, insisting on the ultimate determining status of the economic domain, replicate the category of their own society and its own particular hierarchy of domination. This point is related to the more general problem with these theories: economy-dominated hierarchies of determination presume culture or subsume it in "structure," thus failing to account for, as a separable factor of analysis, a fundamental aspect of sociocultural systems.[3]

Individual Will and Willful Structures

One of the points in the Marxist analyses where the consideration of culture becomes problematical is in the treatment of individuality. Both Althusser and Godelier address the issue of the role of the individual in history. They differ in their assessment but each decultures the individual in his own way.

According to Althusser, individuality is historically determined and individuals merely serve as "supports" (*Träger*) for structures (Althusser and Balibar 1970:111–112, 180, 252–253; Althusser 1970:125). Individual consciousness reflects the false, projected but necessary (fetishized) image of the structures of a society (Althusser 1970:107, 232–234). Godelier, on the other hand, like Sartre (1968:163–165),

[3] Both Althusser's and Godelier's reflectionistic models of hierarchies in feedback are also susceptible to Anthony Wilden's critique of the use of reflection in another context, cf. Wilden 1972:93–94.

writes of the actions of individuals going beyond their intentions and into a level of structural rationality within which they must then exist (Godelier 1967:113; 1972:99, 317, 317n). Despite his awareness of the cultural character of need (Godelier 1972:XV, 45), and his criticism of economic theories which begin with the individual (1972:26, 45), Godelier's own formulations often seem to assume individuality as an uncritical category (1972:30) and echo a classical Hobbesian model of convergence and clash of individual wills that "has never been anyone's conscious plan or the aim pursued by any individual" (Godelier 1972:80–81). This approach is taken almost word for word from Engels' famous letter to Bloch (21 September, 1890). Althusser, sticking to his structural causality, attacks this position savagely, calling it "the myth of homo oeconomicus" (cf. his 1970:120–127).

Both Althusser and Godelier inadequately account for the articulations between culture and consciousness: Althusser by reducing culture to structure as he reduces individuals to supports, and Godelier by assuming individuality as a predefined category within a structured system but without that structure and its culture determining the nature of individuality as such (cf. Sartre 1968:113). The consequence of Althusser's theory of social change is that individuals play little or no causal role in the process which is presumably animated by structure's own immanent causality. Thus, there is little room in this position for the development of class consciousness in individuals on which Althusser relies as one expression ("condensation") of contradictions leading to social transformation ("explosion").[4] His anthropomorphic formulation of structural causality and effectivity precludes his addressing this problem. The consequence of Godelier's position on individuality for his theory of social change is that Godelier can posit their action as one device to get from one structural order to another, to aid and abet structure's own causality. Both scholars refer to this immanent necessity of structural change under the Marxist rubric of contradiction.

The Inner and Outer Limits of Structure

Althusser/Balibar and Godelier share a common vocabulary of "limits of invariance," "correspondence of structures," and "development of contradictions." Both theories distinguish between secondary contradiction(s) and a primary contradiction which is the "motor" of structural change. While the same primary contradiction, that between the productive forces and the relations of production, is the "motor of change," the

[4] Althusser 1970:233; cf. Althusser and Balibar 1970:123–125, 132–133, 138–139, 207–208, for Althusser/Balibar on consciousness and ideology.

two formulations are in direct opposition in their breakdown and positioning of the aspects of the contradiction.[5] Godelier writes:

> We have here contradictions within a system and also contradictions between this system and others . . . the characteristic features of this first contradiction . . . [is that it] is *internal to a structure*. It is specific to the capitalist mode of production. It defines it as such. . . . Being specific, it is characteristic of the system *from its beginning*, and the very working of the system endlessly reproduces it. . . . [The other contradiction is] not a contradiction within a structure but *between two structures*. It is thus not directly a contradiction between individuals or between groups but a contradiction between the structure of the productive forces [their more and more advanced socialization] and the structure of the production-relations [the private ownership of the productive forces]. Now, the paradox is that this contradiction, which is fundamental, since it has to account for the evolution of capitalism and for the necessity of its disappearance, is not *original*, in the sense that it did not exist in the system at its beginning. It appears "at a certain stage" . . . (Godelier 1972:78–79).

The primary contradiction, the "motor of change," is, for Godelier, a contradiction between two structures. Balibar describes these same structures and their contradiction in this way:

> The social formation is the site of a first "contradiction" between the classes. . . . Here it is related just as to its essence to a second form of "contradiction" which Marx is always very careful not to confuse with the first . . . he calls it an "antagonism" . . . i.e. not a struggle between men but an antagonistic structure; it is *inside the economic base*, typical of a determinate mode of production, and its terms are called "the level of the productive forces" and "the relations of production." The antagonism between the productive forces and the relations of production has the effect of a revolutionary rupture, and it is this effect which determines the transition from one mode of production to another . . . and thereby the transformation of the whole social formation (Althusser and Balibar 1970:203).

Here the "motor of change" is a contradiction within one structure. This difference of model boundaries in formulating the same primary contradiction is critical for all that follows in the analysis of social change.

While both conceptions of change contain a notion of accumulation of secondary, nondetermining contradictions (Althusser 1970:99, 216; Godelier 1967:108; 1972:80–81, 87, 90–91, 179–186), Godelier's principal contradiction between two structures reaches "a threshold, to the conditions in which a structure does not change" (1972:90) based upon and developed out of (Godelier 1972:86) the secondary contradiction. This latter contradiction is internal to the structure from its inception,

[5] This is, of course, connected with the earlier noted distinction made by Althusser and Godelier on the place of the economy outside its own site, or other domains within the economic. Both aspects are in both theories but the former is emphasized by Godelier and the latter by Althusser.

actively antagonistic, and yet unable to change the structure on its own because it is "within a system" (Godelier 1972:78). Godelier writes:

> The first contradiction appears with the system and disappears with it. The second appears with the development of the system, and as an effect of the functioning of the first contradiction; but it is fundamental in character because it creates the material conditions for the possibility of the system's disappearance. The relation between these two contradictions thus shows that the *first* contradiction, internal to the relations of production, *does not contain within itself all the conditions for its own solution.* The material conditions of this solution can exist only outside it, because the productive forces are a reality completely distinct from the production-relations and *not reducible* to them, a reality that has its own internal conditions of development and its own time-dimension (1972:86–87).

Godelier's formulation of social change critically depends here upon formulating the problem as one in which a second contradiction (the principal one) is *between* two distinct structures and is the developed result of lesser antagonistic yet nondetermining, contradictions of original immanent "noncorrespondence" within structures (particularly the relations of production). At both levels of contradiction there is a notion of the "limits" within which contradictions will not cause structural change.

For Althusser the principal contradiction, because it is seen as being within one structure in his model, is articulated to secondary contradictions in an altogether different relation. Althusser's principal contradiction is "embodied in" the class struggle (as one of its possible manifestations) which is Godelier's nonprincipal contradiction. This principal contradiction's two parts, production relations and production forces, are the "motor of change" for Althusser (1970:99, 215). This motor is related to nondetermining secondary contradictions, being "inhibited" or "nonantagonistic" (Althusser 1970:101n, 106, 216–217) until suddenly activated in a momentary "fusion." Althusser also describes this relation as one between "dominant" and "secondary" contradictions in which the "general" contradiction is said to be "active in" all the other contradictions (1970:100, also 201–202, 205, 211), and the site of dominance may vary. The actual mechanism causing the "revolutionary rupture" or "fusion" is never clear in Althusser's writing though it is said to be the result of processes of "displacement" and "condensation" within a larger three-stage process. In this process all contradiction is nonantagonistic in the first stage, which merely involves quantitative nonrestructuring change. But, magically, quantity turns to quality through a second antagonistic stage, in the "qualitative leap" of "mutation" (= "ruptural unity," "fusion") of the third stage (Althusser 1970:216). The relationship of this leap ("the moment of global condensation" (Althusser 1970:216)) to the previously nonantagonistic stage one and antagonistic stage two of contradiction, and the relation of stage one to

stage two, and the relationship of all active contradiction to a structure described as "invariant" are unspecified (Althusser 1970:213). The sufficient and necessary cause for the movement from one stage to another is not given. One only has the sense of change as a flash flood. Somehow structure has been separated from process and hence from system. Is there then some notion of limits to account for this movement? Balibar suggests that this Godelierian solution is inadequate but does not specify the other conditions (Althusser and Balibar 1970:291–293).

Godelier has a similar problem at the point in which his principal contradiction develops out of secondary contradiction. He states:

> The class contradictions within the relations of production may "simmer" but no solution will emerge necessarily, unless there is development of the productive forces . . . (Godelier 1967:108).

Elsewhere he refers to this as "the *propulsive* sphere of the system" (Godelier 1972:174). But he does not specify *how* the development of the productive forces occurs. Is there an implied appeal to human reason? There is no structural necessity for this development explained; it is merely given as an immanent necessity.

It should be apparent that both Godelier and Althusser have difficulty with transitions from one structural order to another. For Godelier, nondetermining but active contradiction reaches the point of producing the possibility of a principal active contradiction, which contradiction is the motor of social change. But this process isn't explained. For Althusser, nondetermining secondary contradictions accumulate inactively and in the process of constant changes of strategic value (Althusser 1970: 211–212) until the right combination is reached, resulting in a revolutionary structural dissolution and restructuring. Again, the mechanics of activation are unclear. This leads us to the center of the problem of structure and contradiction; what is this relationship?

In Godelier's model, systemic structural relations at their limits constitute the determining, principal contradiction. Nondetermining, "simmering" contradiction is an immanent characteristic of, and located within, the structure of production relations. It too has limits at which it generates the conditions for principal contradiction (Godelier 1972:80–81). It is active but regional, antagonistic but limited. Secondary contradiction is thus structural instability induced within the limits of structural flexibility. Principal contradiction is global restructuring induced at the limits of systemic flexibility. According to Althusser, structure does not function within limits. Rather, structure is "invariant" and contradiction is the variation and cause of the "mutation" of the invariant structure (Althusser 1970:202, 209, 211, 213, 290). As in Althusser's formulation of the articulations of domains, again the metaphor of reflection is used to describe the relation of contradiction to structure (Althusser 1970:

206–207, 209–211, 217). Again the metaphor conceals the mechanics and quality of the articulation. As well, the metaphor suggests an original state of separation in the model between structure and contradiction which must then be related via reflection. Once this differentiation is made, then the systemic character of structure as process collapses in the breach. Althusser has slipped into the old social science problematic of the radical separation of structure and change (process).

It is at this point of transition, of active contradiction inducing structural change, that Balibar attempts to supplement and expand Althusser's theory. Balibar develops a theory of transition in which transition itself is a mode of production. According to Balibar, a period of transition is a period in which two or more modes of production coexist (Althusser and Balibar 1970:307) and there is a "noncorrespondence" both within the economic domain and among domains (Althusser and Balibar 1970:292–293, 299, 302–305). This noncorrespondence aspect of the model is called the theory of dislocations. With this idea of noncorrespondence or dislocation Balibar develops a theory of limits of his own — explicitly distinguished from Godelier's model, which Balibar believes only gives a nondetermining cyclic contradiction an unearned position of causal dominance (Althusser and Balibar 1970:273–274, 290–291).

For Balibar, Godelier's contradiction between structures represents an "internal contradiction" which "does not tend toward the supersession of the contradiction, but to the perpetuation of its conditions" (Althusser and Balibar 1970:291). These are dislocations within the economic domain by Balibar's reckoning of boundaries (Althusser and Balibar 1970:302, 304–305). The reproduction of the whole structure can and will continue with cyclic breakdown and reconstitution at this level of contradiction (Althusser and Balibar 1970:258–259, 261, 268). It is only at the level of dislocations between domains that supersession of contradiction is possible. But Balibar writes:

> The mode of "correspondence" *between the different levels of the social structure* . . . depends in turn on the form of the internal correspondence of the structure of production (Althusser and Balibar 1970:305).

This dependence is in two respects, according to Balibar: firstly, the "determination in the last instance" by the economy which we previously examined, and secondly, "as the determination of the *limits* within which the effect of one practice can modify another practice from which it is relatively autonomous" (Althusser and Balibar 1970:305). Thus for Balibar, a theory of reciprocal limitation among domains rests on the structure of the modes of production (Althusser and Balibar 1970:307). That structure by itself cannot induce change but it is necessary and determinant of the interdomain contradiction which does lead to radical structural dissolution.

Balibar's discussion of limits and dislocation is confused by a Althusserian metaphor he uses to describe the relation of structure to contradiction: a metaphor of cause and effect in which structure is the cause (invariant) and contradiction is the effect (variation). Balibar states that they are the same (Althusser and Balibar 1970:285), yet he also writes that "there is only a contradiction between the effects, the cause is not divided in itself, it cannot be analysed in antagonistic terms."[6] The question that this metaphor attempts to address was clearly stated by Godelier: "For how can the hypothesis of the appearance of internal contradictions inside a system be reconciled with the thesis that the functioning of this system necessarily *reproduces* its conditions of functioning? (Godelier 1967:99). Balibar's dislocation model evades specifying causal determination of the appearance of contradiction by reference to a cause-effect metaphor which is a tricky dissimulation of the solution. The dislocation is allegedly not between the structures, but rather between their "effects" (Althusser and Balibar 1970:290). Structure (cause) is not contradictory, but contradiction (effect) is structured. The solution to the question of what moves the simple reproduction of the functioning socioeconomic formation into noncorrespondence is concealed in, and presumably explained by the separation/nonseparation that the cause-effect metaphor makes between structure and contradiction. If structure is both the same as contradiction and yet invariant, what is the force or situation that changes internal regular cyclic contradiction into restructuring contradiction? The quantity to quality argument is vigorously rejected (Althusser and Balibar 1970:274; Balibar 1974:241). An argument for the "internal tendencies" of the system as the sole causal mechanism is considered insufficient (Balibar 1974:234, 245). After very careful analysis of an intricate argument it finally becomes apparent that, for Balibar, what supplements the internal tendencies of systems towards dissolution is the *spontaneous* development of the productive forces (Althusser and Balibar 1970:293; Balibar 1974:241). At one point in the argument he states:

> The antagonism between the productive forces and the relations of production has the effect of a revolutionary rupture, and it is this effect which determines the transition from one mode of production to another . . . and thereby the transformation of the whole social formation (Althusser and Balibar 1970:203).

But this antagonism develops out of an invariant structure by virtue of "the concentration of production and the growth of the proletariat" (Althusser and Balibar 1970:293). In fact, this is little more than a supplemented quantity-to-quality argument. It appears, then, that what is

[6] Althusser and Balibar 1970:290. The difference between Balibar and Godelier on "limits" rests essentially on the difference of boundary-drawing. This difference will be further analyzed in a later paper.

not invariant in structure is (a) its exponential growth (which is not determinant of change) and (b) the growth of the population component of the productive forces (which *is* critical). By stating that structure is not contradictory but that these effects are, Balibar rescues invariant structure, a necessity of this model of socioeconomic order, from the perils of inhering ruptural characteristics. Why can't structure itself be contradictory? Because that would create the problem of explaining how any particular socioeconomic system can reproduce itself without qualitative change, and within quantitative limits, when in this model such a system is static (Althusser and Balibar 1970:285, 290). With the cause-effect metaphor and the population bomb, the problem is theorized away.

Turning to the details of structural change as envisioned in this model, Balibar writes,

> . . . the constitution of the structure is a "find" [*trouvaille*] . . . constituted by "finding already there" [*vorfinden*] the elements which its structure combines . . . it means that the formation . . . is completely indifferent to the origin and genesis of the elements which it needs, "finds," and "combines." . . . Instead of uniting the structure and the history of its formation, the genealogy separates the results from its pre-history. It is not the old structure which itself has transformed itself, on the contrary, it has really "died out" as such (Althusser and Balibar 1970:283).

Despite pronouncements against "moments of destructuration," the sense of this theory of transition is that time stops, structural elements play musical chairs, and then the music begins again. In this model, the continuity is of the parts, not of structure. System as such has disappeared entirely. Even the continuity of the parts is only of form and not of content, as Balibar writes of the "radical absence of memory" which characterizes the elements of the old order now restructured. In the first place, this is rather undialectical. Secondly, Balibar's formulation reveals the noncultural quality of this model's elements. Culture has been subsumed uncritically under structure. Finally, the relation of these parts on elements to a whole which articulates them in transition is underdeveloped leaving fundamental questions about how parts change. To consider this movement of parts to be a "mode of production" in its own right (Althusser and Balibar 1970:273) is to merely bring in the same concept as was used to describe the prior invariant structure in order to bridge an unnecessary gap between sequential structural orders caused by an originally faulty separation of structure and change. It has little analytic value.[7]

[7] Balibar revises an earlier position of emphasizing the mode of production over the social formation, and his tendencies toward elemental musical chairs in *Cinq études du matérialisme historique* (1974). There he states that it is the history of the social formation, specifically the class struggle, which reproduces the mode of production on which it rests (pp. 239, 245). The articulation of this with aspects of the earlier position is underdeveloped while the revised formulation itself still partakes of some of the theological problems of the

System and Structure: Concluding Remarks on Structural Marxism

The structural Marxist position as elaborated by Althusser, Balibar, and Godelier suffers from three interrelated problems: (1) a confusion of system and structure, (2) the disappearance of culture into structure, and (3) the arbitrary and ethnocentric labelling and drawing of domain boundaries and their hierarchical order.

These general problems are evident in the Althusser/Balibar formulations in the form of four issues: first, the relation of overdetermination to determination in the last instance, i.e. the problem of hierarchy and the autonomy of domains. This has been adequately discussed already. The second issue is the relation of parts and wholes. Althusser writes that the whole is present in the relations of its parts (effects) and that wholes and parts are analytically inseparable. This suggests that the whole is equal to the sum of its parts and no more (Althusser and Balibar 1970:188–189). Yet Althusser's discussion of the displacements effected by the structure of the whole upon its elements suggests system's effect upon constituent structures. Althusser's discussion of the inherent unevenness yet unity of the whole is also suggestive of a systemic model. Yet in the midst of all this mutual influence within hierarchical constraints and systemic displacement, Althusser insists that the causality governing each element, while due to the structure of the whole, is determined in the last instance by the economy because that commands the hierarchical ordering of the structure of the whole. Here there is a trace of linear causality in the midst of a systemic model. Althusser himself states that he is not yet clear on the relations between hierarchy and autonomy (Althusser and Balibar 1970:186).

The third issue is the separation of structure and change as evident in his formulation of this relation as one of cause and effects, of invariant structure and variations of contradictions. Like Godelier's constant part of a structure, Althusser maintains a continuity of sorts through change: in his model, the continuity is of the same parts which change places and hence, articulations with other parts. Althusser's (and Balibar's) parts-continuity is the functional equivalent in their theory that Godelier's constant part of a structure is to his theory. Both are there to account for consistency through change. The problems of this parts-continuity model and its attendant cause-effect metaphor for structure and change have been noted; its noncultural quality will be mentioned shortly. As for the triggering of change in this model, the immanent necessity of change has been suggested by Althusser and Balibar, but the dynamics of this self-

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old one. Althusser makes essentially the same revisions to his theory in his latest statements in *Essays in self-criticism* (1976), pp. 130, 141, 150, 183, 185. More than any radical revision, this is really more a shift of emphasis between factors in order to give the class struggle centrality.

regulation are not clearly worked out and are teleological in their reliance on the development of the productive forces. Any domain may be a "condensation site" in this model of change, but the "real" contradiction, the real prime mover with Althusser and Balibar, as with Godelier, must be the formulation of the contradiction between the productive forces and the productive relations, propelled into causal determinacy by population growth (cf. Marshall Sahlins 1976:133–134, for his discussion of Marx on population as a "quantity mechanism affecting the form of society").

The fourth and final issue in the Althusser/Balibar theoretical model of social order and social change is the collapse of culture into structure. There is no separate analytic consideration given to a social order's cultural logic. On the one hand, it is dismissed as superstructure (i.e. ideology, which far from covers the content of the category) while on the other hand, it is presumed as a component of the structural order. This is especially apparent in their analysis of change as a continuity of parts in which the past (elements) of a structure disappear in their structural reconstitution. For Balibar and Althusser the pasts (e.g. the productive forces) can disappear because such Marxist categories are fundamentally Western structural categories taken here as simple noncultural universals. Apart from their ethnocentricity, there is a moment in such analyses when the cultural order of economic relations is taken as given "rendering it neutral and inert" (Sahlins 1976:128). Humans don't merely see production in symbolic terms, production itself is culturally constituted and motivated. There is absolutely no awareness of this in the structural Marxist formulation in which the restructuring of social orders is presumed to take place in consideration of the self-evident requirements of structure. In fact, one is finally confronted with nothing more than a theory of structural utilitarianism. And, in contrast to the disappearing act of Althusser/Balibar's pasts of these elements, it is fair to say that in a sociocultural order, *nothing* ever disappears. The cultural meaning and significance of the various behaviors, thoughts, and institutions which constitute a society may conceivably drop out of the consciousnesses of its actors, but the effects (as presence or absent presence) of their prior meaning and organization are constituted in the very existence and reproduction of the society, even in modified or "new" form. It is in the nature of cultural symbols that they cannot disappear.

Godelier's theoretical model also reflects the three general problems of the structural Marxist approach. They are evident in the issues of (1) the nature of the economic domain's participation in other domains, which has already been discussed at length, (2) the separation of structure and change in a formula such that structures must "tolerate" events (Godelier 1967:113; 1972:99). As Emmanuel Terray put it, in such models "change appears as a foreign body, as a sort of poison which the structure

must eliminate or die" (Godelier 1972:41). Godelier has taken Sartre's problematic of human action and intent versus the practico-inert (Sartre 1968:87–89, 163–165) and substituted the word "structure" for "practico-inert." This is the theoretical status which Godelier seems to give to the structured whole into which human action is placed and its effects displaced. Sartre's statement that "language and culture are not inside the individual. . . it is the individual who is inside culture and inside language" (1968:113) becomes Godelier's statement that "the intentional behaviorial rationality of the members of a society is always inscribed within the basic unintentional rationality" of the total system within which they live (Godelier 1967:113). Sartre refers to these as "impersonal," "monstrous," "counter-finalities" which are unintentionally created by man's actions and then forever constrain him. In such a model structure seems to play the role that "tradition" does for the tradition versus modernity theorists. Like Althusser, Godelier's model radically separates structure and process. A concept of limits suggests a range of "compatible variations" within which structure can tolerate process (Godelier 1967:99), but this brings us to the third issue: Godelier explicitly ascribes, by his notion of limits, a constant element to structure which is reproduced and within which the variations leading to contradiction appear (1967:99, 110). What this element is, how it is to be analytically distinguished, and why its constancy is necessary have yet to be explained. Nor again, as with Althusser, is the relationship between the constant element (Althusser's invariant structure) and contradiction, or incompatible variation (Althusser's variations of contradiction) explicated. The notion of limits by itself is inadequate to explain the development of "contradictions born of the functioning of the system" (Godelier 1967:110). Besides the possibilities of varieties of change induced at the limits, and varieties of limit factors, the concept itself is, like structural causality, a tautology. It cannot explain why a structure formerly in equilibrium within limits goes beyond its limits. This brings us to the fourth point: As in the instance of Althusser and Balibar, the sole critical factor in structural change in Godelier's model is "the development of the productive forces." Whether or not this is the same growth-of-the-proletariat population aspect of that development is not specified (Godelier 1967:108, 110). Finally, insofar as Godelier's model participates in Sartre's problematic of the practico-inert, it is the model of a world without people because the manifestations of structures are culturally meaningful objects, and Godelier's structure, mechanistically tolerating events is treated more like a *deus ex machina* than a culturally-constituted human creation. Godelier seems to have simply replaced a bourgeois economic anthropological focus on the individual and his rationality with a focus on "individuals" as an "abstract aggregate" with its own rationality (cf. Sahlins 1976:134). But this is still not a systems

level analysis, for the whole is a mere aggregate of individual actions against the practico-inert of their previous intended actions, now developed into unintended consequences. Further, even a systems level analysis in which the modalities of existence of the whole exceed and differ from the modalities of its constituent parts must theoretically consider that the universe as it is known and acted in by humans is a cultural universe. Thus any rationality of the whole must be a rationality which has continuity with the cultural logic which animates the system in the first instance. For Godelier, as for Althusser and Balibar, such cultural logics collapse uncritically into structure. In addition, for Godelier, structures are somehow above culture.

To summarize briefly how both Althusser/Balibar and Godelier approach the general problems of social transformation theory, it seems that, in varying degrees on the various points, both (1) see the process of history as necessary, and at the present juncture, the necessary and good (r)evolution of capitalism into socialism, (2) have a one-dimensional explanation of the cause of change ultimately residing in the economic domain, specifically the development of the productive forces, (3) require radical structural change in order to arrive at any restructuring of a system; all other change being subsumed under the notions of quantitative or cyclic change, and (4) confuse system and structure and mystify the nature of their articulations. Nonetheless these theories are valuable in their attempt to (1) decenter social change theory from its focus on the individual as agent of or obstacle to change, (2) outline the relations of system to structure, (3) consider varieties of change-modalities, (4) measure change in terms of the internal conditions and functioning of an on-going system, and (5) consider all the elements of a society as active aspects in any transition. The structural Marxists thus provide an adequate point of departure from which to synthesize the diverse traditions of cybernetic theory. Marxist analysis, and cultural anthropology into a Marxist *cultural* theory of system and structure.

CASE STUDY: SOUTH INDIA

Two studies of the Tamil village area of Thaiyur panchayat, in Chingleput District near Madras in South India represent prime examples of the application of structural Marxist theory to ethnographic data. In these studies, conducted by the Swedish anthropologists Goran Djurfeldt and Staffan Lindberg (1975a, 1975b), the cultural significance of behavior and ideas falls prey to distortion in the service of vulgar Marxist theory. There is hardly any ethnography evident in the work and this, in itself, is quite significant. It is symptomatic of the current tendencies in the use of such a theoretical framework to interpret ethnographic data. Needless to

say, Godelier and Althusser cannot be held responsible for such use of their theories in ethnographic praxis. However, until Godelier completes his own research in New Guinea these studies must suffice. Djurfeldt and Lindberg's field notes are reduced to what amount to qualified guesses compressed into exploitation-ratio charts and compounded into generalized theories of Indian society and history. This is not to say that rich ethnographies are impossible using a Marxist framework (just the contrary is the case), but the Djurfeldt and Lindberg studies represent in extreme form the tendencies of structural Marxist analysis to reduce the richness and depth of an indigenous cultural order to the bones of ethnocentric abstraction. The criticisms which follow are made to strengthen and clarify Marxist ethnography.

In the "Introductory perspectives" section of *Behind poverty: the social formation in a Tamil village* Djurfeldt and Lindberg set out their theoretical model.[8] They claim to be in fundamental agreement with both Althusser and Godelier except on a few minor points. They take issue with Godelier on the relationship between kinship and the economic domain

> . . . we have been unable to follow Godelier when he interprets infrastructure as a functional distinction. This allows him to say that in primitive societies kinship *functions as* infrastructure. . . . If this is to mean that "kinship is thus here both infrastructure and superstructure" . . . then the material content of the infrastructure is lost, and, with it, an essential ingredient of historical *materialism* (1975a:27).

Referring to a later Godelier article, Djurfeldt and Lindberg clarify their approach to the issue

> . . . it is clear that kinship and relations of production are structures of a different order; the latter is an abstract concept referring to a material reality, while the former refers to the subjective genealogical categories in which people apprehend of their interrelations . . . the explanation of the dominance of kinship is to be sought . . . in the relations of production (i.e. in the basis). It can also explain what happens when, as a result of class differentiation, production relations are no longer apprehended as kinship relations, but get another interpretation. . . . Then kinship ceases to be dominant, but may still retain political, juridical, and ideological functions. In Thaiyur, for example, we will interpret the functions of kinship as mainly ideological. . . . The basis thus determines the functions of the superstructure (1975a:28).

The effect of this approach will be analysed shortly, but it is already obvious that Djurfeldt and Lindberg dismiss anything utilizing indigenous categories as "ideology," or "false consciousness."

As for Althusser, they attempt to refine his concept of "determination

[8] This essay will concentrate primarily on the monograph *Behind poverty: the social formation in a Tamil village*, leaving an analysis of *Pills against poverty* for a separate essay on ethnomedicine and Marxist theory.

in the last instance" by suggesting a notion of mutual constraint which they term "restrictive determination."

Basically this means that the infrastructure retains the ultimate primacy of determination of the social formation but that it only "restrictively" determines the possible forms of the superstructure (Djurfeldt and Lindberg 1975a:28–29). At the same time, the various domains of the superstructure restrictively constrain one another. This revision of Althusser is an attempt to stress the "relative autonomy" of the superstructure aspect of Althusser's work, but it still shares the ultimate determination of social order and process by the economy. The notion of determination in the last instance is used both implicitly and explicitly throughout their studies (1975a:42, 118, 206, 216, 226, 252, 256, 270, 291; 1975b:100).

In their analysis of the economic domain, Djurfeldt and Lindberg are opposed to Emmanuel Terray's notions about the combination of modes of production (1975a:205–207). Instead they seem to accept Etienne Balibar's notion that a period of transition is a mode of production in its own right (1975a:128, 203, 207).

To these Marxist theories Djurfeldt and Lindberg add a variety of other models and methods. First, they add their own brand of Weberian *Verstehen*, with the qualification that

> . . . *verstehen* is in principle only a rather trivial preliminary to the scientific explanation as such. Science begins when we want to explain the subjective categories in which individuals conceive their own behaviour and the structures in which they are placed. When we take this step from description to explanation, we switch from *verstehende Soziologie* to historical materialism . . . (1975b:34).

This opens the door to a central feature of their "explanation," a constant reference to the West, both for the categories of the analysis as well as ethnocentric presumptions about medicine, biology, land, labor, wealth, and status. What is not explained through the explicitly Western categories is usually explained through ethnocentric presumptions concerning the nature of human action in the world. There is virtually no consideration given to indigenous categories and explanations. These are dismissed as "ideological," parallelling simplistic emic-etic, so-called cultural materialistic distinctions.

Djurfeldt and Lindberg also constantly refer to a generalized model of Indian society based upon "progressive historical research" (1975a:40, 41n). Their model defines Indian features in terms of similarity to various phases in the history of Western civilization.

Finally, the authors occasionally resort to quasi-ecological arguments which are not well-articulated with the Marxist perspective (1975a:58, 110, 118).

The distortions caused by the application of all of these theoretical

orientations are most visible in Djurfeldt and Lindberg's analysis of Thaiyur panchayat, including their own generalized model of Indian society. I shall turn now to that analysis.

History in the Application of Historical Materialist Theory to Ethnography

Early in their interpretation of medieval India and the transformations of the social formation during that period Djurfeldt and Lindberg write:

> *The ethnographic present of the archaic and exotic India found in anthropological monographs can be placed in the Middle Ages, c. 400–1200 A.D.* (1975a:34; original emphasis).

In effect these anthropologists create history out of ethnography. What is more, their "history" is a reification of the ahistorical static-India claims of the ethnographies of the 1950's. It is surprising to find this in an allegedly dialectical treatment of social process but this contradiction between an equilibrium model and dialectics is problematic throughout their studies. It is a reflection in practice of the theoretical problems that both Althusser and Godelier have with the relation between system, structure, and contradiction.

This reconstructed history of the medieval social formation acts as another constant backdrop against which to explain the contemporary situation (Djurfeldt and Lindberg 1975a:200, 263). It is critical therefore to note at the outset that this history, the "exotic present" projected back in time, has absolutely no legitimate basis in actual texts of the period. When Djurfeldt and Lindberg do refer to texts such as *Manu-smrti*, it is only to condemn them as ideology (1975a:42, 43, 45). A good example of this misuse of (fantasy) history is in their analysis of caste and class.

Caste, Class, and Ideology: Marxist Maya and Is Dumont a Secret Braham?

In discussing the general relation of caste to class, Djurfeldt and Lindberg write that "the entire social formation is dominated by the caste system" and that, in medieval India, "class position is ascribed by caste position" (1975a:34, 40). However, due to British influence on land ownership, "the ancient caste dominance was transferred to the new relations of production and the foundation of the present class structure was laid." They add that "at the same time the unity between class and caste slowly started to dissolve" (1975a:61, 62). As land ownership is considered to be the basis of class in Thaiyur, the argument that the dominance of the social formation has shifted from caste to class, with the attendant result

that caste today is simply an ideology, a fetishized maya (illusion) of the "real" social relations, is based on Djurfeldt and Lindberg's premise that private ownership of land did not exist in India prior to the British (1975a:50–52, 63–64). This in turn is based on turning a historically-determined definition into an abstract, global definition of private property, which is considered to be an inevitable, universal stage of development in the evolution of modes of production, one that in this case the British introduced to India. However, it is not clear that such transformations did occur in India because both the descriptive categories of evolving forms of ownership and the process itself are based on the unique Western European development. It was to explain that unique development, and that development *alone* that Marx established the categories and process which Djurfeldt and Lindberg inappropriately apply to Indian history in order to support their caste-to-class argument. The changes in landownership which did occur with British imperialism imply neither inevitable evolution of modes of production nor inevitable differentiation of class out of caste. As we will note shortly, this class-caste distinction distorts rather than explicates the social life of Thaiyur.

The "progressive historical" interpretation has little relation to reality, but it is part and parcel of Djurfeldt and Lindberg's wholehearted acceptance of the 1950's model of the Indian village as self-contained and stable with a rigid jajmani and varna social order. This, in turn results in their interpretation of the contemporary situation which they see as static "underdevelopment" (see for example 1975a:203). Indeed, their own analysis merely substitutes "underdevelopment of labor" for "jajmani" as the equilibrium factor in village economies. For all their abstract recognition of the village being part of a wider capitalist network, their own model of the village suspiciously resembles that of the ethnocentric ethnographers they criticize.[9]

In contemporary South India, Djurfeldt and Lindberg conceive of class consciousness as distorted, "seldom expressed in pure form" (1975a: 41n) because it is mystified by jati ideology.[10] This ideology is said to be Brahmanical sociology and Louis Dumont's work on Indian culture is said to be no more than an advocacy of Brahmanical oppression-reflecting ideology (1975a:42). When Djurfeldt and Lindberg encounter expressions of caste solidarity in Thaiyur, they consider these to be modern day occurrences of "false consciousness" about the nature of the social system. Thus all mention of caste emancipation movements are reduced to mystification of the "real" power relations of the village (1975a:251–252, 291).

[9] There is a real problem in sections of their writings in determining when they are speaking of the past and when they are speaking of the present.

[10] Incidentally, the ethnographers use the terms varna, jati, and caste indiscriminately. They seem oblivious to the history of controversy surrounding the usages of these terms.

Djurfeldt and Lindberg's attack on Dumont brings to the fore a critical issue, evident in both ethnographic analysis and in general social science models, of non-Western sociocultural systems: the question of valid categories for analysis. Djurfeldt and Lindberg claim that Dumont merely adopts an oppressive Brahmanical sociology as a "theory of the caste system." They write:

> Our distinction between three different levels, those of kinship, (endogamy), economy, and ideology, is blurred in Dumont's universe. . . . Dumont denies the possibility of a historical-materialist interpretation of the caste system: The ritual hierarchy cannot be seen as determined, even in the last instance, by an economic structure functioning as its basis (1975a:43).

Clearly Djurfeldt and Lindberg have misunderstood Dumont's intention which was to uncover the indigenous logic of the social and cultural systems — that is, the cultural meaning of the order, regardless of the origins and the function of such a logic. Dumont does not blur domains, rather he reveals animating values which he believes organize and articulate domains.[11] One may argue with his choice and limitation of organizing principles but his project is clear. This critique of Djurfeldt and Lindberg should not be taken as a defense of Dumont. There are serious problems with his structuralist approach. It is reductionism of another sort, reifying his own interpretation of a pan-Indian cultural logic. However, it is useful to examine Djurfeldt and Lindberg's attack on Dumont as it reveals the shortcomings of their own position.

Djurfeldt and Lindberg proceed to dispute Dumont on the relation between the two highest varna in the system, Brahman and Kshatriya. According to Dumont this is a hierarchical opposition exemplifying the series of oppositions throughout the levels of the system which define the system as such. But according to the Swedish Marxists the varna system is "strongly reminiscent of the European estate system" (1975a:43). They proceed to compare India to "tributary societies" and finally decide that in medieval India, out of which the Brahmanical sociology suddenly arose without a past:

> The situation was similar [to that] during the classical feudal period in Europe. Under such circumstances, the king cannot be deified, *only the kingdom can be!* For this task, "deificators" are needed, and their influence must be more than local. . . . No wonder that all kings favoured the Brahmins (1975a:45; parenthesis added).

The notion of jati continues to exist in contemporary India because the ideas "are developed and propagated by priests dominating the ideologi-

[11] They themselves note that "jati becomes a code, . . . both a mode of behaving and a mode of thinking which *contains* all spheres of social reality, from economy to religion" (1975a:215).

cal apparatus" (1975a:215). Thus, despite the fact that the jati system has allegedly succumbed to class society jati ideology is still a dominant axis of status differentiation because of the power of the priests and the power of maya (illusion or false consciousness). It is important to note the explanation of indigenous categories with constant reference to European history. This mode of analysis is pervasive in their writing and is specifically linked to their methodology: *verstehen* is just preliminary while the real explanation lies in fitting the situation to simplisticly-used Marxist categories. Djurfeldt and Lindberg's rejection of Dumont is predicated on the idealist-materialist axis (1975a:45). This axis is not an appropriate measure of theoretical significance, as Marshall Sahlins recently pointed out:

> As for the charge of "idealism" that an insistence on the meaningful appears to invite, this . . . must take its ground in precisely the kind of preanthropological, presymbolic epistemology of subject/object relations whose transcendence was the historical condition of a concept of culture. . . . Here was the specifically anthropological contribution to the established dualism: a tertium quid, culture, not merely mediating the human relation to the world by a social logic of significance, but constituting by that scheme the relevant subjective and objective terms of the relationship (Sahlins 1976:IX–X).

In short, Djurfeldt and Lindberg's material/class — ideal/caste axis of analysis is presymbolic, conveniently ignorant of the cultural quality of human existence at one moment of the analysis only to blackmarket it later. Dumont's work is an attempt to discover a symbolic logic — the charge of idealism participates in an archaic anthropology.

Contemporary Caste, Class, and Congenital Capitalism

Given the fact that Thaiyur village is 89.6 percent Harijan, that they own "most" of the land, that they constitute "many" of the "big" farmers (Djurfeldt and Lindberg 1975a:73, 75, 216), and that most of them help one another in agricultural production, cooperating, but using market transactions instead of simple labor exchange (1975a:130, 131, 150), Djurfeldt and Lindberg are hard-pressed to find class society and exploitation there. Nevertheless they manage to do so by deploying the meager and unreliable (by their own admission [1975a:75, 81, 84, 124, 137, 154, 154n, 164n and so on]) data which they do have.

The people of the Thaiyur community are divided into eight classes on the basis of the amount of land they own, the manner in which they work the land, and their "income" (1975a:163–165). All of these figures are said to be unreliable yet they are used to create the model of the society and support all of the arguments concerning surplus-value and exploita-

tion. The eight-class structure is "simplified" to a three-class model of the structure of exploitation (1975a:166), and eventually this is reduced to two categories, the good guys and the bad guys (1975a:275). This successfully obliterates the manifold nature of communication and exchange in Thaiyur panchayat.

Amidst the exploitation-ratio charts for the eight, three, and two class structures, there is a quite crucial point that the ethnographers both admit and choose to ignore: most of the real individuals of Thaiyur panchayat fit into and are counted in *more than one class.* There is a critical overlap between those people the ethnographers choose to regard as exploiters and those they choose to regard as exploited. Djurfeldt and Lindberg admit that it is difficult to label the villagers as members of distinct classes, yet they persist in a Leninist definition of class as a position and role in a system of social economy (1975a:147–149, 151n, 165). In the same way we noted how Althusser saw individuals as "supports" in the structure of production. With this understanding, the Swedish ethnographers use class-analysis as the backbone for the understanding of Thaiyur society, even to the point of contradicting themselves and stating that classes do in fact exist as real social statuses in Thaiyur (1975a:149, 167, 195) and not simply as abstract, analytical categories.

That there are rich and poor and that the poor are starving is not being called into question. What I am challenging is the reduction of this village's social organization to one axis of analysis which is believed to account for all behavior and beliefs. There is no doubt that in Thaiyur relations of dominance exist, but class is an irrelevant term where the status differentiation is based also on noneconomic factors. Status may also vary by situation. There are clues throughout their studies to other axes of status determination: farmer-coolie, caste identity, kinship, Hindu-Christian, age, personal attributes (Djurfeldt and Lindbergh 1975a:169, 232, 291, 238, 262, 264, 276, 286, 314, 319, 364). All of these occasions for status differentiation are ignored by Djurfeldt and Lindberg. When they appear to be active in some context, they are consistently dismissed as "false consciousness." For example, kinship is said to hide the "real basis of power" (1975a:260), and kinship rituals are "ideology materialized" as "false consciousness" (1975a:237). Thus the expressed cognitive categories of social life in Thaiyur are evaded or obliterated.

All of this is not to say that exploitation does not exist in Thaiyur, but it does not exist as a *universal abstract category.* Exploitation must be defined relative to each particular sociocultural formation, as Marx indicated. Exploitation is not only an economic fact; it is a cultural experience. Djurfeldt and Lindberg never clearly establish who is exploiting whom and how, because their class analysis succeeds in blurring the on-the-ground social relations and the cultural meaning of the communi-

cations and exchanges which occur in Thaiyur; a problem which I shall now examine.

Exploitation and Cooperation: Blackmarketing Culture

There are many types of labor exchange in Thaiyur's agricultural production. Besides family labor, there are some sharecroppers and permanent farm servants (*padiyal*). These are said to amount to a very small percentage (Djurfeldt and Lindberg 1975a:126, 128). If one carefully examines the information that Djurfeldt and Lindberg provide on labor-exchange, a fact of critical significance emerges: every farmer, from small to large landowner, seems to need to hire wage-labor to help him in cultivation (1975a:129–131). This is the case not only for technical reasons:

> They seem to do so, both for technical and social reasons. . . . But to a certain extent it has also become a norm to hire labourers for what society defines as team tasks. The norm is not strictly enforced, but those small farmers who comply with it are regarded as generous men by their neighbours, while those who deviate are regarded as misers. The temptation to break the norm is greatest for a small farmer. . . . Still not even a very small cultivator can manage entirely without hiring labourers (Djurfeldt and Lindberg 1975a:130).

And who are these wage laborers that even very small farmers must hire for both technical and *cultural* reasons?

> . . . small farmers constitute a considerable part of the wage-labour force. . . . But much wage-labour is employed by the small farmers themselves. So the end result is that small farmers work as coolies for *each other* (1975a:131).

As Djurfeldt and Lindberg rightly observe, this is no more than an exchange of labor functioning through the market (1975a:131, 150). With such an overlap of roles and with no precise figures on who employs whom for how much, it is very difficult to go along with Djurfeldt and Lindberg in conceptualizing this as a class structure replete with exploitation. They acknowledge that such reciprocal exchange is not exploitation, but the categories of "wage-laborer," "big landowner," and "small landowner," are used to establish that Thaiyur is a class society. It becomes obvious that when the roles of farmer and wage-laborer are held by the same people, and when cooperation is a cultural value it serves no useful analytic function to speak of class in Thaiyur.

As for exploitation, Djurfeldt and Lindberg write

> . . . the social relation between the small farmer and his hired labourers is quite another than that between the rich farmer and his coolies. The former are equals, today they are employer-employee, tomorrow the relation may be reversed. . . . It is different when the same small farmers work as coolies in the fields of a rich

farmer. Then they toil beside each other, and the employer stands at the bund of the field, shouting orders and watching them. . . . In this case the employment is not reciprocal and therefore the employer-employee relation is one of exploitation, and a class-relation (1975a:131).

Calling the workers "hired laborers" when they toil for a smaller farmer and "coolies" when they work for a larger farmer does not in itself constitute the grounds for considering the latter exploitation. Nor does the lack of reciprocity in itself establish this. (Indeed, this is merely asserted next to a statement that reciprocity is the norm. There is no data on the extent of employment of whom by whom.) Further, the employer, be he small or large, must supervise the employees.[12] The critical question thus becomes one of *comparative* wages. We are given no accurate data on this. Nor again are we given accurate data on the relative distribution of land. (By their own admission it is "our own unreliable census data," Djurfeldt and Lindberg 1975a:124.) This lack makes it hard indeed to establish the existence, let alone the nature, of class relations and exploitation in Thaiyur. If the wage scales are comparable (as they imply), then a lack of reciprocity could be based on a wide variety of cultural determinants (Djurfeldt and Lindberg 1975a:128, 129, 131).

The most curious element in this whole analysis is the manner in which culture is literally "blackmarketed." At earlier moment in this study we noted how ideas were dismissed as ideology and hence as "false consciousness." Yet here in the midst of their analysis of labor relations, the cultural value of cooperation is smuggled in, covered with "the formal imprint of the dominant capitalism" (Djurfeldt and Lindberg 1975a: 150), and marketed in juxtaposition to "shouting" to prove that the big farmers are exploiters. Such a selective use of culture points to the need for better integration of cultural analysis as a component in any Marxist anthropology.

Land and Class: Blackmarketing Culture, Part 2

Land is said to be the actual basis of the class-structure (Djurfeldt and Lindberg 1975a:82, 121, 123, 131). We are therefore led to inquire just what landownership and land cultivation mean in Thaiyur?[13] Djurfeldt and Lindberg do not address these questions, but in the course of reporting informants' responses to other questions, certain indigenous notions about land and land cultivation appear. One informant states:

[12] Djurfeldt and Lindberg 1975a:131. When it is small farmers who are hiring small farmers as laborers, the coordination is considered "technically necessary," while when it is a big farmer hiring smaller farmers such coordination is termed "exploitation."

[13] The only advantages which the ethnographers speak of in owning land is its use-value. "Land is a real asset" (Djurfeldt and Lindberg 1975a:145).

Actually, I don't find any profit in tilling this land. I'm doing it just to keep up my prestige. If I don't grow paddy, people will say: "Oh, he is not able to farm his land. He can't keep up the traditions from his father". So, only in order to keep the good name of my family, am I cultivating this poor soil (Djurfeldt and Lindberg 1975a:130).

Another informant, with very little land, is asked why he has purchased bullocks when it is not very profitable for so small a landowner. The farmer replies, after giving some utilitarian reasons:

And it is considered prestigious to own bullocks. Only then will I be considered a real farmer. Otherwise people will think I am only a coolie (Djurfeldt and Lindberg 1975a:169).

There is obviously a very high cultural valuation, above and beyond the economic value, both on owning land and on being a cultivator of land. We are led to ask what being a "farmer" as opposed to being a "coolie" means in this village? It is obviously not simply a question of owning land, nor of the quantity of land one owns. The reduction of the person to roles in a class structure all but obliterates even the possibility of asking such a question. Djurfeldt and Lindberg only see the "sound economic reasons," for example, in owning animals. But for this informant, being a "real farmer" is symbolized by owning those bullocks in a way that his small landholding by itself does not. There are elements of status, prestige, and identity here that are animated by a cultural logic of which the current Marxist analysis seems unaware. Nevertheless, the cultural value of land and land-cultivation is used, i.e. blackmarketed, in the analysis when it is convenient to the argument:

The "petty landlord" is not an uncommon figure, but most small landowners prefer to cultivate their land themselves. The reason seems to be that small landlords are often cheated by their tenants. Moreover, social norms prescribe self-cultivation . . . (Djurfeldt and Lindberg 1975a:145).

In this type of explanation the ethnographer first plays the "straight" Marxist market of looking for utilitarian reasons why certain behavior occurs. When, and only when, they appear insufficient or inadequate, does the ethnographer turn to the darkened recesses of the culture bazaar to pick up an idle explanatory norm or two on the blackmarket. This is obviously connected to a methodology in which understanding the indigenous categories is considered simply a "preliminary" step to a science in which the ethnographer always knows best.

Peasant Rationality: The Salt of the Earth

The local salt factory is said to be the key to understanding the Thaiyur

economy (Djurfeldt and Lindberg 1975a:71, 73). It merits our close attention. Djurfeldt and Lindberg approach the salt workers as a unique category, separate from the farmers. But in fact, the salt workers are farmers, working during the agricultural off-season (1975a:76, 130, 192, 199). The establishment of categories despite the overlap is again in consideration of the Leninist/Althusserian theory of positions (*träjet*) in the structure of production. This model leads the ethnographers to state that:

> The workers doing practically all work receive less than half the total income from production. . . . Their daily wages hardly suffice to feed an ordinary family, and leave no margin to save for the slack season. Now we can better understand the role of the salt industry in the Thaiyur economy. Far from increasing the income of the rural proletariat, it has instead led to a decrease in real wage rates. Both salt and agricultural coolie wages are below those in the surrounding area. The net result is that, in order to survive, agricultural labourers and poor peasants have to work also in the salt fields, and thereby for a longer period, but not with a proportionate increase in the yearly wage . . . the whole economy, the wages, etc., have adjusted to a situation in which agriculture is complemented with salt production, and in which neither sector meets the full costs of reproduction of their labour force (Djurfeldt and Lindberg 1975a:192).

Yet it is abundantly clear even from the meager data provided that it is not at all a question of survival. The Harijans are working in the salt industry, in addition to farming, in order to earn money to buy land to be better farmers.[14] And, as the figures indicate, they are succeeding in doing just that. In the past 100 years the Harijans have managed to acquire most of the land of Thaiyur from the formerly big landowners, the Vellahas (1975a:76, 174). Most significantly, the salt factory began large-scale production with the completion of a critical canal between 1856 and 1860 (1975a:176–177). This parallels precisely the ethnographers' statements that the Harijans have been obtaining all their land in the past 100 years.[15] Thus the farmers' labor in the salt factory is, in most cases, not at all for survival, and "farmers" and "salt workers" are not separate categories, the intentionality of each being to provide *a portion* of a full year's living expenses. The deployment of "Marxian" categories distort the on-the-ground facts: *farmers* are working as work-

[14] Djurfeldt and Lindberg admit as much, contradicting their survival argument when they state: "Harijans have acquired land through cash savings earned in the salt fields, as in Malayan rubber plantations and in many other ways" (p. 76), and "we have met with several examples of salt-field workers who have managed to save enough to buy land" (1975a:174).

[15] Let us remember that the total landless, i.e. agricultural coolie, population of Thaiyur is only 150 out of a population of 5,000 (p. 150), and that the number of salt coolies is approximately 4,470 (p. 189). So obviously landholding farmers are the majority of the salt workers. At this critical juncture, of how many farmers, especially those who now own big or recently obtained farms, work or have worked in the salt fields, the ethnographers have no information (1975a:181, 188, 192).

ers in order to be greater *farmers* because *farming* is a strong cultural value. The relation between the salt and the earth is perfectly clear.

Rationality, Irrationality, and Underdevelopment

The Thaiyur economy is said by the ethnographers to be in a state of "underdevelopment" due to a fundamental "irrationality" of the system as a whole (1975a:112–113, 118, 173). The agents in the system, however, are said to be "rational" (1975a:141, 152). The system is said to be irrational because of its inability to overcome class barriers in the interests of collective well-being. Djurfeldt and Lindberg write

> . . . the productive forces inherent in the co-operation between many labourers in the process of production . . . are totally undeveloped . . . the productive capacities of the individual worker are far from utilized. With the prevailing crop pattern and methods of cultivation as main determinants of the labour input, the individual worker is employed only for part of the year (1975a:112).
>
> Still, there are tasks crying to be done: improvement of irrigation works, sinking more wells, soil management, and conservation, etc. But these tasks require full co-operation by many labourers under the leadership of a motivated management. This underutilization of the productive forces of the "collective labourer" is the most blatant of all. We think that many of the symptoms called "underdevelopment" can be attributed to this underutilization of labour (1975a:113).

This underdevelopment of labor input is also said to be the cause of a massive "ecocrisis" in Thaiyur (1975a:110, 118). The root cause of the underutilization of labor in Thaiyur is identified as the landownership pattern:

> We conclude, then, that the forces of production can be seen as contained by the relations of production, and that this containment explains the inability of the system to adapt itself to an increasing population, and to correct the ecological imbalances . . . (1975a:173).

It is critical to recall at this point that (1) farmers choose to work in the salt factories rather than work the land throughout the year, (2) the forces of production, i.e. the farmers, largely help each other during the agricultural season and this in no way can be generally construed as an exploitative relationship, (3) there is said to be an "oversupply" of labor during part of the year (1975a:184) which is not utilized in agriculture because the farmers will not cultivate at the time; the weather is not appropriate to the crops which Thaiyur farmers wish to grow, and the oversupply does not dispose toward collective labor for the common good. The ethnographers say the reason for this nonutilitarian attitude (by Western standards) is that collective labor is "fundamentally incompatible with

the present social order" (1975a:106). But the causes restraining labor input are *cultural choices*) they are not based on irrational class interests. The ethnographers are presuming that rationality means the production of the maximum possible agricultural output (1975a:105). They state that "there are no absolute ecological or technological barriers to an expansion of the productive forces in Thaiyur agriculture" (1975a:105). But, as indicated above, there are cultural reasons which the presumption of restrained self-maximizing individuals reduces to class interests. If one attempts to understand the system in terms of the cultural significance of behavior and ideas then Djurfeldt and Lindberg's "structure of underdevelopment" becomes a culturally meaningful order of production. To paraphrase Marshall Sahlins, the action and organization of production itself is symbolically determined (1976:128). Social norms do not operate as constraints on production. They *are* production — the production and reproduction of a sociocultural order. This, a system, by definition, cannot be "irrational," although it may well be exploitative.

Kinship: Mystified Medium for Exploitation and Dominance

Despite the fact that Djurfeldt and Lindberg reject Godelier's formulation of the relation between kinship and the economic domain, they nevertheless utilize an inferior version of that very framework in their discussion of kinship in Thaiyur (1975a:133). They claim that the kinship "idiom" hides the real nature of human relations in Thaiyur: "kinsmen often occupy antagonistic positions in relations of exploitation, but their "fraternity" tends to gloss over the basic antagonism" (1975a:239). Lineage is reduced to a "ceremonial function" (1975a:235). The ethnographers write

> . . . the ideology materialized in kinship rituals is false consciousness. The lineage is projected as an exogamous brother-hood (*pangali*) and, since isogamy and generalized exchange imply equality in status between the exogamous brotherhoods, the entire bilateral kindred stands out as a community of equals. This is false consciousness, as is evident when the rules are confronted with their results. Although the rules are isogamous, the search for marriage partners which are equal in status leads to an internal subdivision of the caste into smaller segments separated by virtual but unrecognized barriers of endogamy (Djurfeldt and Lindberg 1975a:237).

While there is some truth in this statement, the complexity of the relationship between equalitarianism and hierarchy as organizing principles cannot be so smoothly reduced to true and false consciousness; the question of cultural logic is also involved. But further, a native informant explains why such lineages do eventually publicly split:

— Lineages often split when they no longer consist of only *tayadi.*
— Is there any maximum size for a lineage?
— Yes, the lineage will naturally split. The members will multiply. They can't stick together. There may be hundreds of families. Who can manage that? (1975a:235).

Both the reduction of the lineage to a "ceremonial function," and kinship to "false consciousness" are directly related to the fact that the ethnographers unwittingly take the nuclear family as the basic cross-culturally universal category (1975a:241). Thus, this unit is said to be "subordinated to the wider kinship system," but "not stressed in ideology" (1975a:241). Finally, on the relation of kinship to politics, Djurfeldt and Lindberg write

. . . kinship serves as an "idiom" in which power relations can be conceived and expressed. But kinship is not the basis of those power relations. On the contrary, kinship serves to hide the real basis of power in the very process [of bringing] power into consciousness (1975a:260).

In short, kinship as a meaningful and motivating system of symbolic behavior is considered to have no legitimacy on its own. Only the nuclear family is properly the domain of kinship. All else is ideology, false consciousness, idiom. In this particular species of ethnographic practice, then, the theoretical call for the maintenance of the relative autonomy of superstructural domains is a casualty to vulgar materialist reductionism.

Tradition: The Stagnation and Sorcery of the Economic Base

Djurfeldt and Lindberg's treatment of the religious life of Thaiyur adheres to the mechanical materialist orientation. They speak of religion as an "illusion," "spontaneously created by thought" (1975a:150), as well as "false consciousness" which legitimates the existing social order (1975a:249–250). One presumes that such spontaneity of thought is also false consciousness.

Without going into detail it is sufficient to say that in the ethnographers' interpretation, God is the Celestial Patron, temples are "investments" (1975a:47), the diversity of religious beliefs is a "religious division of labour" (1975a:140, 141, 143, 155), and "religious medical systems" serve "practical functions" (1975a:141, 170). In one of the few lengthy pieces of ethnographic reporting, the researchers describe an *Adi Kappu* ceremony which is complete with *puja* [worship], goddess-possession, and sacrifice. The ethnographers conclude that the ceremony is a false expression of caste solidarity and equality when "in reality, the Paraiyan are not equal" (1975a:247). They also attribute to the cere-

mony a second function: "a latent function in the washing away of sins." A sin according to the ethnographers, being any transgression of the proper social order: the ceremony of dipping the wives' hands in the slaughtered animals' blood absolves disconformity (1975a:247, 250). According to this interpretation, the fact that it is only the wives who perform the absolving act is said to mean that they represent the community. All personal motives relevant to, and indigenous cultural explanations of, the ceremony are left unreported. The richness, depth, and significance of the ritual, its constituted meanings are ignored.

As a final example, I note what Djurfeldt and Lindberg say of informants' statements about the climate of Thaiyur. They write:

> People in Thaiyur tend to see these fluctuations as brought about by suprahuman forces: but their fitfulness are not unrelated to human activities, as explained by the postmaster: I haven't seen such a drought since my childhood. . . . In olden days our ancestors used to worship the Moon and the Sun, and keep them in reverence. But now, man has set his foot upon the moon. . . . Now Nature feels ashamed when Man has come up to Her level and imitated Her. So the rains which were to our benefit have stopped falling. And today man has even ventured to make artificial rains. You see, those things are disgraceful to God who created Nature. I think that is the reason for the monsoon failures.
>
> But we also met with other, and more secular theories. One old man attributed the monsoon failure to the many newly dug wells. . . . Both theories are false . . . (1975a:101).

The ethnographers then explain how, like all false consciousness, these theories do grasp a small element of the ecological truth that man's exploitation of the environment is to some degree responsible for the monsoon's failure. Here cultural logic is reduced to the poorly transmitted messages of the Eco-Mind. Djurfeldt and Lindberg's statement that "social life is a part of Nature" again reflects a presymbolic anthropology (1975a:101) in which traditions are never legitimate in their own right. At the same time, it denies the dialectic between culture and nature so deeply embedded in the Marxist tradition; not to speak of Marx's focus on the dynamics of social life which he explicitly stated were neither analogous to, nor a part of nature.

The Ethnographic Praxis of Structural Marxism

In their theoretical models, Althusser and Godelier give a good deal of consideration to structural limits, reciprocal determination, and contradiction. Yet both theorists have a hard time dealing with social change. This dilemma emerges clearly in ethnographic praxis.

In Djurfeldt and Lindberg's analysis population growth is regarded as one of the mechanisms of social change in the past (1975a:53). They

seem to hope that it may again be in the future (1975a:173). The structural contradictions and incompatibilities categorized in the ethnography as the irrationality of the system are considered to be within the limits of structural invariance, though they border on an ecological disaster. The ethnographers conclude that the contemporary situation is one of stagnation and will be until a revolution occurs (1975a:174–175, 195, 316–317).

I noted that in the structural Marxist theory itself there are tendencies to reduce culture to ideology or to subsume it under structure. In ethnographic praxis we have seen these tendencies manifest in both aspects. There is a consistent reduction of culture to false consciousness and ideology in Djurfeldt and Lindberg's monographs. A second aspect of this first tendency is the blackmarketing of culture when it proves convenient. At that moment of the analysis, culture is brought in as an explanation or associated factor of a more basic causal determinant of some aspect of the social formation; culture is never accepted or understood as an explanation of behavior or institutions in and of itself. The second tendency, to subsume culture in structure, is manifest in this ethnography the presumption that the structure of the productive relations and the level of the productive forces are "underdeveloped." The cultural premises and organization on which the underdeveloped mode of production rest are taken as a "given." Class is criticized as constraining production but culture is merely considered the armament of class relations, and not as a critical factor in the determination of the existing mode of production.

Finally, on the relations between domains in a society, despite pronouncements to the contrary, it appears that the notion of relative autonomy within "determination in the last instance" reduces itself in ethnographic praxis to a vulgar materialist position of determination of the superstructural forms and articulations by class relations based on landownership. The mutual conditioning aspect stressed by Djurfeldt and Lindberg in their theoretical introduction is not followed through in the analysis. This is no accident. Thus far, it has been the tendency of such underdeveloped theories to buckle in analytical use under the weight of ethnographic diversity, and to collapse into mechanical modes of analysis which do violence to the integrity of alien institutions, behavior patterns, and symbolic systems.

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Genetic Epistemology, Marxism, and Anthropology

GERALD BERTHOUD

> All science would be superfluous if the *outward appearance* and the *essence* of things directly coincided (Marx 1967 3:817. Italics added).
>
> For a scientific mind, any knowledge is an answer to a question . . . Nothing is *given*. Everything is *constructed* (Bachelard 1967:14. Author's translation, italics added).
>
> The total structuralism sticks to the system of *observable relations* or interactions, . . . whereas the characteristic of a methodical structuralism is to search for the explanation of this system in an *underlying structure* (Piaget 1968:83. Author's translation, italics added).

So far, anthropologists have not been really attracted by an epistemological evaluation of their own field. Such a reflexive and critical attitude toward their own intellectual production is frequently equated with a pure philosophical speculation devoid of any scientific relevance. If science is reduced, as is often the case among anthropologists, to the solid grounds of "facts," any epistemological quest is outside the realm of anthropology. But if epistemology, as it is practiced by Piaget and others, enlightens experimentally the process of scientific knowledge, anthropologists can no longer ignore the instrumentality of this multidisciplinary undertaking which is genetic epistemology.[1]

The main result of genetic epistemology is a condemnation of "apriorism" and empiricism,[2] as two reductive modes of knowledge which,

[1] Genetic epistemology, as developed by Piaget, has an unquestionable scientific status: "he [Piaget] tackled questions so far exclusively philosophical with a resolutely empirical manner and constituted epistemology as a science separated from philosophy but linked with all the human sciences" (quoted in Piaget 1970:6–7. Author's translation).

[2] Here empiricism corresponds to the French term *empiriste* and not *empirique*. It is viewed as "a disregarding of scientific methods and relying solely on experience," or "the theory that sensory experience is the only source of knowledge" (*Webster's New World dictionary*).

respectively, tend to minimize the part of the object or the subject (see Piaget 1970:5).

The main blunder of any cognitive reductionism is to use an atomistic or associationistic approach, dealing at an elemental level. To insist, as do a great many anthropologists, on the unilateral importance of "facts," and simultaneously to stigmatize any theoretical endeavor as being simple speculation or jargon, is a dangerous tendency toward mediocrity. These very scholars, who quite easily accuse other anthropologists who have theoretical concern, of "jargonization," are themselves unconsciously victims of this bias by way of an indiscriminate use of concepts (note, for example, the intersocietal use of "capital," in which its material and formal meaning are totally confused). In a way, we are flooded with data which very often are of limited use, precisely because they have been collected with a principle of classic ethnography in mind: "data first, theory after." This is an excellent application of an atomistic view.

Many anthropologists are blinded by the unilateral primacy of facts, so that they quite naturally neglect to *conceptualize* their ethnographies. They easily dichotomize between those who are looking for "substance" (i.e. data) and those who are interested in so-called speculation (i.e. theory in my own terms). To insist rigidly that "theory must be based on substance" is to reject the relational preponderance between an object and a subject in the process of knowledge. To argue that anthropologists are "more and more involved in theoretical discussions with plays on words, ideological and intellectual discriminations, precisely because they do not have any data to work"[3] is to be ignorant of the Piagetian opposition between "objectivity" and "realism":

> There are two ways of being a realist. Or rather, objectivity and realism must be distinguished. Objectivity consists in knowing so well the thousand intrusions which derive from it — illusions of the senses, language, points of view, values, etc. — that, to be allowed to judge, one starts to get free from the obstacles of oneself. Realism, on the contrary, consists in ignoring the existence of oneself, and, consequently, in taking one's proper view for immediately objective, and for absolute (Piaget, in Battro 1966:122. Author's translation).

The cognitive process in anthropology, as in any similar field, must be conceptualized as a dialectic, i.e. as a relationship in constant transformations between two active elements, or a subject and an object. It is therefore easy to see that in this case the emphasis is no longer placed on the elements themselves but on the relation.[4]

[3] Remarks heard at the symposium "New directions in formal economic anthropology: operationalizing the method," held at the meeting of the American Anthropological Association in New York City (November, 1971).

[4] "It is in the logic of constructivism, of the relational method and of any dialectic synthesizing in an effective way structures and geneses, to result sooner or later in an unseparable interaction between the contributions of the subject and those of the object in the mechanism, not only of knowledge in general but of all the particular varieties of scientific knowledge" (Piaget 1967:1243. Author's translation).

In short, subject and object are not dissociable. If we reject an atomistic or associationistic way of thinking, the process of knowledge must be viewed as a specific *mode of production* of the concrete, or, as I am inclined to call it, a "cognitive dialectic." There is an ever-renewed effort to reach the *construct.* On the contrary, empiricism, whatever its form and its degree may be, can be viewed as a *mode of perception* by which we remain at the level of the *given.* Empiricism is thus an unsuccessful way of reaching scientific knowledge. By reducing or neglecting the active role of the "epistemic" subject (e.g. the anthropologist) in any process of knowledge, the result is an explicative impotence — by remaining at a pure descriptive level, and holding to an ideological view of the "lived" level of social phenomena. Empiricism is thus alien to any conceptual construction trying to reach the underlying structural causes explaining any kind of social situation.

This can easily be illustrated by a classical example borrowed from celestial mechanics, which discriminates between apparent and actual or true movement. For the perception of any subject the sun rises and sets. This observation does not go beyond the superficial level of appearance or immediacy. At the explicative level, such a perceptive given is invalidate. Similarly, in the production of knowledge, in fields centered on man, we meet the same kind of paradox.

Anthropologists, like any scientists, cannot escape the epistemological problem of knowledge. From all the preceding statements, it follows that a clear discrimination must be established between *ideology* and *science.* For Piaget, "to know is to *produce* in thought, in a way to reconstitute the mode of production of phenomena" (Battro 1966:35. Author's translation). Such a conception of the cognitive process is exemplified in the works of Marx and in those of his serious followers.

What is at issue here is not the particular knowledge of Marx on a specific object traditionally included in anthropology. The main potentialities of Marxism lie on a methodological basis, whatever the real concrete object of study may be. To accept Marxism as a recipe would be to bury oneself in an ideological pitfall. Any actual scholar, trying to use Marxist problematics, is aware that he has to work according to Marx's method and not to follow him slavishly.

CRITICAL REMARKS ON THE PRODUCTION OF ANTHROPOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE

From now on I want to stress the relevance of my previous arguments[5] for

[5] Readers who would like to study thoroughly the process of cognitive production, presented here in a quite epitomized version, could delve into the works of Piaget (1967, 1968, 1970, 1972).

an evaluation of various anthropological results, as possible explanations[6] of ethnographic material. Although the construction of an actual dialectical anthropology is still in a quite early stage, the joint teaching of genetic epistemology and Marxism allows me not only to appeal to humanistic and ethical views (i.e. non-explicative) about anthropology, but also to formulate radical criticisms, which claim a scientific status, however limited.

According to my present level of knowledge, I will isolate four modalities of empiricism, or *modes of perception.* These four ideological conceptions of knowledge correspond to four forms of reduction based on (1) things, (2) individuals, (3) social groups, and (4) a sociocentric model of reference, implicit or not.

What could be labeled reductionism, in its four occurrences, is equated in my view with rejection of a relational complexity, and its replacement by elements which belong to a directly visible and thence ideological level, quite typical of any empiricism. We do not then *produce* knowledge, but rather *perceive* ideas and notions. All four of these elements are modalities of a global phenomenal reductionism.

Each of these empiricist reductionisms will be discussed separately, although it should be understood that one may find a combination of at least two forms within the intellectual production of a single scholar.

Reifying Reductionism

This ideological approach in the process of anthropological knowledge is adequately represented by what is loosely termed the "substantivist" tendency in economic anthropology.

Following Polanyi, the substantivists emphasize exchange at the expense of production to explain any economic system (Bohannan 1963:231). This restrictive view is particularly obvious in the widely used ideological notions (here purely descriptive, hence superficial) of "spheres of exchange," "multicentric economy," and the like (Bohannan and Bohannan 1968; Bohannan and Dalton 1965; etc.).

The shift from exchange to production brings the question "what is production?" To oppose a mode of production to a mode of exchange is far from being a mere reversal of the economic order, in which production is simply taking the place of exchange. It is not the process of immediate or effective production which is opposed to the "exchange tendency," but

[6] The search for causation, the attempt to reach an explicative level, is not an obvious anthropological objective today. The position of Kroeber (around 1925) on that matter, as it is reported by J. Steward, cannot be considered as obsolete: "I asked Kroeber when I would learn about explanations, upon which he said in some horror, 'What do you mean? I deal with cultural phenomena, not explanations'." (Personal letter to M. Harris, 1969).

the whole process of production obviously comprising the three other moments: distribution, exchange, and consumption. This total repetitive performance is in fact a process of *reproduction*, not only of things, but also of specific social relations. This process of reproduction is, in its complex totality, a mode of material production (i.e. the economic level), in which the dominant moment is always the social relations of production opposing two sets of economic agents in a hierarchical position, according to modalities defined by the specific social totality (i.e. lineage, feudal, capitalist structures, etc.).

To posit the primacy of exchange tends to view this particular moment of the total economic process as a set of reified relations among products, and to forget that these relations are external manifestations (i.e. mere observation) of specific social relations already defined in production. Anthropologists, unable to go beyond a deceptive clarity of a perceptive given, do not realize that "the scientific truth is always paradoxical to the judgments of daily experience which perceives only the misleading appearance of things" (Marx 1965:508. Author's translation).

Notions like "spheres of exchange," "multicentric economy," "prestige goods," and so on are not erroneous, but they are *percepts*, which here means terms devoid of any cognitive power, and thus unfit to explain "real-concrete" facts. Indeed such categories, designed primarily to deal with exchange, become highly embarrassing if we accept the postulate that an analysis of exchange itself passes through the explicative mediation of the process of social production. In the pseudotheory of "multicentricity," the material appearance of things is the essential factor to discriminate "spheres of exchange." As long as this approach is applied to a single society, in which a material differentiation of goods is operative to distinguish various spheres, the deficiency of the theory is not manifest. It becomes obvious when a cross-societal analysis is attempted with such a tool (see Berthoud 1969–1970).

To equate economy strictly with a flow of things is a very serious anthropological blunder.[7] Such a reified image prevents one from seeing that economic relations are a specific kind of social relations in which human beings and things are structurally determined.

Unquestionably, terms like "spheres of exchange" and others are simple ethnographic observations. When the ethnographer has seen, or has been told that the exchange of anything for anything is not possible, the task for him is to find out why goods and services are so categorized. To define an economy as "multicentric" tells us nothing about the actual mechanisms of the system, but favors the mere *result* of exchange at the

[7] "The economist abstracts from the untidy complexities of social life a neat world of commodities. It is the behavior of commodities, not the behavior of men which is the prime focus of interest in economic studies. The economist's world is a world of prices, quantities, interest rates, production, consumption, income, etc." (Boulding 1956:82).

expense of the process (already determined in production). What should be the starting point of a theoretical work is offered as an end product. No knowledge is produced; only an arrangement of perceptive givens is described. We remain in the realm of things: appearance, or determined indices, and essence, or determinant factors, are thus confused at the expense of the latter. From any ethnographic observation we must construct *concepts*, which will explain the presence or absence of a so-called multicentric economy. The objective is thus to reach the specific underlying causes of any mode of exchange.

To view certain total economic processes in terms of "multicentric economy" leads to a consideration of reciprocal and hierarchical relations only among things, and to the neglect of similar relations among economic agents (e.g. youths, elders, women) who produce, exchange, and consume these things. Indeed, as Marx has cogently demonstrated for capital (1965:212), "prestige goods," whether as a discrete material domain or not, are not in essence things but the external expression of a specific distribution peculiar to lineage modes of production, in which juniors and elders, as distinctive sets, and not as individual subjects, are in opposition in the social relations of production.

An arbitrary selection of ethnographic data results from such a theoretical distortion. For instance, the monograph *Tiv economy* does not escape this deficiency. A fair description of the production (technical and social relations), and of the appropriation of so-called prestige goods is lacking. Instead, market places, considered as "peripheral" and "important beyond their economic importance" (Bohannan and Bohannan), fill four chapters of the book, maybe because "market places are among the most obvious and easily observed of Tiv institutions" (1968:146–147).

So far I have brought my criticisms to bear on the internal complexity of what is loosely termed "segmentary" society, or, more ideologically, "stateless" society, with no reference to any change. Indeed, the substantivists, by emphasizing the most immediate level of any ethnographic observation, as their reifying reductionism proves it, are unable to explain various modalities of articulation of modes of production.

Today, the main problem faced by anthropologists, especially when involved in the study of marginal areas by reference to the main centers of capitalistic development, is to conceptualize various forms of articulation of an internationally dominant capitalist mode of production with a certain number of pre- and noncapitalist modes of production.

In this respect, the substantivists, practicing in their own way a well-founded approach to classic anthropology (i.e. typical or representative of established principles in this discipline), evacuate this complexity of the second degree, which is the articulation of modes of production, and the transition from one to the other, by using a comparative-static view.

Dalton, one of the main proponents of the substantive view in economic anthropology, reaches an extreme relativistic position when he postulates that two *unrelated* particular theories are needed to explain the so-called primitives and industrial capitalism. Economic anthropology on one side would produce the necessary tool for knowledge of the first, whereas economics would do the same for the second (Dalton 1969). Such a particularistic position is even more obvious when Dalton argues that "conventional economics is relevant to the commercialized sectors of peasant economic *organization* and useful in quantifying economic *performance*" (1969:65), thus implying that economic anthropology is relevant in the "subsistence" sectors. Such a division of labor between economic anthropology and economics would be total denial of the existence of the articulation, and hence a unilateral view unable to explain the complexity of the situation.

"Intersubjectivistic" Reductionism

This form of empiricism presents several modalities of existence in anthropology. Although my critical remarks seem to me to be valid for the technique of network analysis, or the psychologistic[8] approach, "culture and personality," I will concentrate on the economic anthropological tendency known as "formalist."

Any approach whose objective is knowledge of a *social* reality should be particularly cautious about any preferential treatment of individuals, in the various analytical steps. The obvious danger is to leave society as such out of consideration. An idealistic explanation,[9] stipulating that what is in the minds of the people is an essential causative factor, is illusory because it confuses effect with cause. An actual dialectical conception of knowledge implies the acceptance of a logical order of priority, in which the structural determinants or constraints take precedence over individual variations in the form of choices of subjective motivation. To record an individual strategy is not to explain it — unless the structural constraints are taken into account — as being the causative factors in the last instance. Although individuals present behavioral variations, they are determined by their positions in the power structures (economic, political, and ideological), and their actions can be understood only

[8] "Psychologistic" is opposed to psychological. Such an opposition is parallel to that of "empiricist — empirical." According to Piaget, "the individualistic touch of numerous sociologies" is predominantly generated by "an insufficient psychology" (1965:29).

[9] At the other extreme, a fatalistic explanation, or a pure mechanistic materialism, which is a deeply rooted belief in oversimplistic principles wrongly attributed to Marx, is also to be condemned. Marx and his serious followers (i.e. those who keep a critical point of view) have never accepted viewer history, on the one hand, without alternative, and individuals, on the other, as simple cogs in a machine.

within an analysis of *social relations* which should not be confused with interpersonal or intersubjective relations (Marx 1970:122; or Piaget, in Battro 1966:168).

Such a theoretical position is opposed to a fashionable conception in anthropology which favors, in a psychologistic manner, specific individuals as units of inquiry, and considers them primarily as autonomous centers of decisions. The individual as such is not a free element, even if ideologically he sees his competitive behavior as a pure manifestation of his own ability. In other words, society tends to be an aggregate of subjects *consciously* maximizing and making choices.

Thus, a widespread inclination in economic anthropology tends to accept the explanatory universality of a marginalistic-oriented economic theory, centered on the individuals (see Goldschmidt 1972). There are two ways of viewing economy, at the individual level and at the societal or structural level. However, in an anthropological perspective, social structure should come first.

The society is not a sum of individuals or even a sum of intersubjective relations, as opposed to the superficial view of perception. A unilateral insistence upon the explanatory value of interindividual transactions[10] illustrates the individualistic bias[11] found in "formalist" economic anthropology.

Both the classical economists and the marginalists favor the abstraction of the "autonomous individual," by accepting the invariance of human nature throughout time and space. This view was reinforced when the capitalist mode of production became more and more dominant in its liberal form of free trade, and does not seem to have been seriously questioned in the succeeding era of monopoly capital and the increasing intervention of the state.

Consequently, a projection in economic anthropology of the marginalists' positions, regarding their definitional level of economy, raises serious problems. Such an emphasis on individual behavior, and not on the social whole, impairs any methodological and theoretical transference, particularly if we accept the holistic tendency of anthropology, or at least its intentional refusal to neglect the societal context of any studied element. I must insist here that, contrary to a formalist view (see, for example, Schneider 1970:1–3), a societal approach does not mean at all a

[10] A large consensus among economic anthropologists illustrates this preferential attitude toward transactions. Firth, for instance, asserts: "The significance of the economy is seen to lie in the *transactions* of which it is composed and therefore in the quality of *relationships* which these transactions create, express, sustain, and modify. . . . The emphasis of interest is still upon the transaction rather than upon the production" (1967:4).

[11] Piaget points out the universal existence in science of a "reductionistic tendency, striving to bring down the superior to the inferior or the complex to the simple," and one of the examples he gives is the reduction of "society to combinations of elementary individual characters" (1967:1228).

communalistic view marked by an absence of dissent and conflict. Indeed, a dialectical analysis is a way of isolating conceptually relevant contradictions within any social whole.

Other considerations, such as the possible universal validity of master concepts (e.g. capital, profit, wage labor, etc.), question the adoption of a marginalist practice by economic anthropologists, if they are really interested in a cross-societal or comparative approach.

If the substantivists are unable theoretically to account for the specific articulations of various modes of production with capitalism, the formalists are not more successful. However, with them we are moving within a homogeneous field in which everything acquires a capitalist nature (with variations in degree). An extreme, even caricatured, view of such a position is exemplified by Pospisil's "discovery" of "primitive capitalism" among the Kapauku of New Guinea (1963).

This human naturalization is a sociocentric view which seriously impedes any progress in the development of a genuine anthropological discipline, based on a search for similarities, but also differences, among past and present existing social forms.

Any particular concept, like capital for instance, denotes *socially* and *historically* determined ties among agents, of specific social relations. It does not denote a thing, relations among things, or pure intersubjective ties, according to a point of view peculiar to the ideological discourse of the subjects. The concept, capital, must not be reified by being defined materially, and thus confused with any means of production. Marx, quite cogently, stigmatizes this so-called universal validity of capital:

> The means and objects of labor . . . play their part in any labor process, at all times and in any case. If then I give them the name of capital . . . I shall have demonstrated that the existence of capital is, for human production, an eternal law of nature and that a Kirghiz who, with a knife stolen from Russians, cuts rushes to make his boat is as much a capitalist as Mr. Rothschild. I could as well demonstrate that Greeks and Romans celebrated the Lord's Supper, because they drank wine and ate bread, and that Turks sprinkle themselves daily with Catholic holy water, because they wash themselves every day (Marx 1968:425. Author's translation).

Pseudostructural Reductionism

This third version of empiricism is found in the classic structural-functional approach of British social anthropology, emphasizing groupings[12] as part of an empirical social structure. This widespread approach shows how anthropology fails to distinguish conceptually between two

[12] See Harris' statement: "Domestic groupings and political groupings constitute the most important categories of social structure" (1971:145).

hierarchical levels of any process of knowledge. Indeed, a structure, to have the explanatory power of directly observable, or *given* sociocultural phenomena, must be *constructed*. An actual cognitive process rejects any form of skin-deep structuralism. Such an ideological approach (i.e. remaining at the "lived" level) is radically opposed to any kind of conceptual structuralism (i.e. produced and not simply perceived). Social structure, in the empiricist conception of structuralism, is equated to clearly visible structures. In other words, there seem to exist immediately perceivable centers revealing as such the structural order (i.e. economic, juridico-political, and ideological); whereas for a conceptual structuralism, any real-concrete element, individual, or group, is the locus of multiple and complex structural determinations. A concrete social relation may very well depend on the three structural domains, according to a combination in dominance. Fundamentally, this methodological structuralism, in the words of Piaget (1968:83), contradicts what Fortes claims to be scientific: "a good theoretical model — that is, one which tells us . . . how the social system works — must correspond to the pragmatic model" (1969:82). With such a high degree of concordance between the constructed "model" of the anthropologist and the "lived model" of the subjects, ideology as a social domain is blurred, with the exception of directly visible sectors such as the religious one.

In contradistinction to an idealistic approach, emphasizing the effective role of consciousness as a causative factor of sociocultural phenomena, it is interesting to find again a consensual view, between Marx and Piaget, on the explicative relevance of a certain kind of materialism. Thus, in a review of *Capital* in a Russian journal (1872) and quoted by Marx with approval, we can read:

> Marx treats the social movement as a process of natural history, governed by laws not only independent of human will, consciousness and intelligence, but rather, on the contrary, determining that will, consciousness, and intelligence. . . . If in the history of civilisation the conscious element plays a part so subordinate, then it is self-evident that a critical inquiry whose subject matter is civilisation, can, less than anything else, have for its basis any form of, or any result of, consciousness. That is to say, that not the idea, but the material phenomenon alone can serve as its starting point (quoted in Marx 1967:18).

For Piaget:

> The merit of K. Marx is . . . to have distinguished in the social phenomena an effective infrastructure and a superstructure oscillating between symbolism and adequate taking of conscience, in the same direction . . . in which psychology is obliged to distinguish between actual behavior and conscience. . . . The social superstructure is then dependent on infrastructure as the conscience may be a self-apology, a symbolic transposition or an inadequate reflection of behavior, or as it succeeds in extending this one in the form of interiorized actions and

operations developing real action; so the social superstructure will oscillate between ideology and science (1965:76–77. Author's translation).

When ideology is not viewed as the specific domain of any social reality, which must be isolated by analytical work and articulated with other sectors, one reaches a theoretical dead end, by creating categories lacking any internal homogeneity. The categories become an analytical jumble, in which economic, juridical, political, and ideological dimensions are confused. The following assertion seems to me to be a very good illustration of such a mixture: "The realm of custom, belief, and social organization, which we descriptively identify by the overall rubric of kinship, is both *analytically* distinguishable and *empirically* specifiable as a relatively discrete domain of social structure" (Fortes 1969:250. Emphasis added).

On the contrary, for a methodological structuralism, the ideological discourse on the subjects (representations, ideas, value judgments) gives only a distorted knowledge of their own social structure. This ideological discourse constitutes the superficial level of the structure and only a theoretical work allows one to reach the deep and hidden level of social relations.

Another essential shortcoming of the structural-functional approach is its refusal to consider a diachronic perspective (see Fortes 1969:308–309). This negligence precludes an explanation of structural transformations, dissolutions, transitions, and other forms of change in African societies and others in precolonial times, under the impact of the colonial (political dominance) and postcolonial (economic dominance) periods. A classic structural-functional approach is in fact static and consensual by overemphasizing the jural domain (normative aspect of social relations).

To go beyond the idealistic view of so many ethnographies, which describe various ethnic groups as if they have never known any exogenous intervention or, at best, as if they had been quite marginally affected, we strongly need a theory of the passage from one social form to another, or more broadly, a theory of the articulation of modes of production (including the corresponding superstructural domains).

The genetic-structural approach of Piaget — for whom genesis and structure are not antinomic but two elements of the same methodological whole and of Marxism with important concepts such as mode of production, reproduction, etc. — could help anthropologists to build a theory of diachrony. To refuse to construct the dialectical anthropology, articulating genesis and structure and insisting on processes, is to relegate this discipline to a purely gratuitous intellectual exercise, passionately looking for archaic and exotic customs. The result is that it is useless in reference to relevant problems of the present time: imperialism, neocolonialism, "underdevelopment," poverty, minorities, etc.

"Continuistic" Reductionism

My adopted conception of knowledge is based on a fundamental principle of discontinuity. Suffice it to mention here the concept of mode of production with all its concomitants, which establishes a periodication of specific historical processes, ideologically perceived as continuous developments.

On the contrary, a "continuistic" approach has been flourishing in anthropology for some time. The idea of an absolute continuum — differing in degree only — has been, and still is, widely used for all kinds of typologies (see, for example, Frankenburg 1966:130). The following pairs of opposition are widespread examples of the theoretical level reached by anthropology in the intrasocietal and intersocietal comparisons: traditional-modern, rural-urban, primitive-civilized, simple-complex, marketless-market, stateless-state, classless-class.

With such a comparative-static view, the theoretical problem of the passage is excluded and replaced by an empiricist vision, in which only gradual changes occur. Moreover with the refusal to admit conceptually (as opposed to descriptively) the passage by leaps from one social mode to another, one element of the dichotomy is simply defined, implicitly (but sometimes explicitly), in relation to the other one. A rural situation, a "simple" society, a "primitive" people, or a traditional organization are referred to their counterparts at the other end of the continuum, and appear very often as no more than their rigorous negatives.

Such results pertain to sociocentrism, and thus, in the last analysis, to the egocentrism[13] of the anthropologist, who is unable to get rid of a model of reference, which is, in effect, his own actual experience.

Within a dialectical anthropological approach, the pairs "rural-urban," "simple-complex" are poor abstractions of the real-concrete. They are pure *givens*, whereas they should be *constructs* resulting from an effective cognitive production. Indeed, these terms are external and thus quite superficial expressions of specific modes of production, which are at various stages of their history, and which could be scientifically known only by a theoretical work, and not by intuitive abstractions.

"Continuistic" perspectives are a recurrent theme in economic and political anthropology. They are examples of a widely used practice of defining so-called segmentary societies and even more differentiated ones in negative terms.

A quick look at the literature of anthropology shows a profusion of terms and categories simply denoting the absence of something that is specific to our own social system. Capitalistic institutions are accepted as

[13] Analogous with the Piagetian concept of egocentrism, sociocentrism may be viewed as "the confusion of ego and the other," or an "inability to differentiate between other and ego" (Piaget, in Battro 1966:57).

standards established for the evaluation of any society. If we push such reasoning to its very end, we could define any "segmentary" society without recourse to painstaking theoretical work. Taking as models our familiar institutions — market, state, court, and church — we could then specify a "segmentary" society, in a strict sense, as a nonentity:[14] a marketless, stateless courtless, and churchless society. The first two terms, at least, belong integrally to the conceptual equipment of anthropologists.

Negative terms tell us what a social system is not, but not what it is intrinsically. To explain an empirical reality with negations is to elevate them to constituent elements of an actual theoretical discourse. There is no question that in our present state of knowledge, certain negative and privative terms are useful, although they should always be considered as ideological devices.

Ultimately it is imperative to explain any social system in positive terms, which does not mean by use of a particularistic approach, such as the recourse to the ideology of the folk view. What we need is a general problematic that places all social forms on an equal basis, rather than favoring one to the extent of using it as an explicit or implicit pattern for the others. Such problematics, on a highly abstract theoretical level, is a prerequisite for the formulation of particular theories, producing the knowledge of specific real-concrete situations.

CONCLUSION

This paper has been centered on a discussion of scientific production versus ideological perception. A critical anthropology, based on a theoretical radicalism, appears to be an absolute necessity for a diagnosis of any social situation, and for any practical intervention, if spontaneity in knowledge and action is to be avoided.

My four recorded modalities of ideological reductionism, although quite sketchy, reveal that many contemporary anthropologists, unlike Marx, have not yet realized their Copernican revolution and are entangled in a Ptolemaic system — by mistaking a subjective perception for a scientific explanation.

Unquestionably, the mode of anthropological knowledge proposed here is only in embryo for various reasons. Suffice it to mention the strong

[14] The following quotation is a rigorous illustration of a definition as a nonentity: "The Tiv have a *subsistence* economy whose chief characteristics are households that are capable of self-suffiency, *lack* of external trade, *lack* of general-purpose money, *lack* of a market for the factors of production [i.e. land and labor], market places that are used for 'economic' exchange of certain goods but not others and have '*non*-economic' uses, and a *lack* of a general profit incentive, coupled with egalitarianism and *lack* of a concept of ownership in the Western sense" (Schneider 1969:931. Emphasis added).

traditional submission in social anthropology to a certain idealistic strategy through Durkheimian thought, and the disproportionate emphasis by Marxists upon analyses of the mode of capitalist production, at the expense of its articulation with other modes of production, and of a knowledge of these modes as such.

Anthropologists should seriously consider, with adequate epistemological criteria to appraise their own scientific production, if, for instance, they want to take up the challenge of such a sentential statement:

> As a mass, the intellectuals . . . have not really recognized, or have refused to recognize, the unprecedented scope of Marx's scientific discovery, which they have condemned and despised, and which they distort when they do discuss it. *With a few exceptions*, they are still "dabbling" in political economy, sociology, ethnology, anthropology, social psychology, etc., etc . . ., even today, *100 years after Capital*, just as some Aristotelian physicists were "dabbling" in physics, *50 years after* Galileo. Their "theories" are ideological anachronisms, rejuvenated with a large dose of intellectual subtleties and ultra-modern mathematical techniques (Althusser 1970:6–7).

Undoubtedly, those anthropologists deeply rooted in the security of empiricism, and advocating, with an unshakable belief, the unilateral importance of fact, see nothing but pure jargon in any attempt to conceptualize these facts within a theoretical discourse. The mystifying power of empiricism is so strong that it can only be successfully eliminated through scientific knowledge concerning the role of the social scientist in the cognitive process. An appeal to genetic epistemology, viewed as a multidisciplinary field and not as a philosophical quest, is essential to avoid the insidious attraction of ideology. Empiricists claim that we should stick close to the "lived," or actual experience, whereas genetic epistemology and scientific Marxism teach us to depart from it, if we want to reach the intelligibility of any real-concrete phenomena.

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On the Dialectic of Exogamic Exchange

FERRUCCIO ROSSI-LANDI

NONMERCANTILE EXCHANGE

The anthropogenic power of exchange is second only to that of work. But if by "exchange" we meant only *mercantile* exchange in a strict sense, that is, the *exchange of commodities*, in ethnology and related disciplines we would be facing a number of difficulties which can be summarized as follows. One cannot assume the existence of mercantile exchange — in the sense of a proper market where independent private producers appear, each with his own commodities to exchange — in primitive societies; and the more so, the more one goes back towards primordial times.

Marx and Engels are the first to be explicit on this point. Not all products are commodities, not even when they are consumed by persons other than the producer. In *Capital*, Marx makes it clear that his concern is purely with what happens "in a society of commodity producers." The division of labor, he says,

> . . . is essential to the production of commodities; although it is not true, conversely, that there is no social division of labor in the absence of commodity production. In the primitive communities of India there is social division of labor, but the products of this community production do not become commodities. To take an example that lies nearer to our hand, in every factory there is a systematic division of labor, but this division of labor is not brought into being by an exchange of individual products among the workers in the factory. The only

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products which confront one another as commodities are those produced by reciprocally independent enterprises (Marx and Engels 1963: vol. 33, pp. 56–57; Marx 1962a:11).

In a passage reintroduced by Engels into the fourth edition of Book One of *Capital* after Marx's death, we read again that:

> The medieval peasant produced cense-corn for the seigneur and tithe-corn for the priest; but the fact that they were produced for others did not make commodities of cense-corn and tithe-corn. To become a commodity, a product must pass by way of *exchange* into the hands of the other person for whom it is a use-value (Marx and Engels 1963: vol. 33, p. 55).

And in a footnote Engels comments: "It has often and wrongly been supposed that Marx regarded as commodities all products that were consumed by other persons than the producers" (1963: vol. 33, pp. 9–10). Now if the distinction between undifferentiated and differentiated work were applicable only to full-fledged commodities, outside of the field of commodities it would not be permissible to attribute a "value" to any other product. Nor would it then be possible to maintain that nonverbal and verbal sign systems are interpretable by means of the dialectic between use-value and exchange-value, according to the two kinds of work that determine them.[1] Everything that is not a commodity would have use-value only. The labor theory of value would be inapplicable outside the field of the production and exchange of commodities proper, or its application would be only metaphorical.

The solution to these difficulties rests on the discovery that nonmercantile exchange exists in social zones which are severed from that of the market, and which antedate it. Marx himself in the *Grundrisse*[2] asserts

[1] Let us recall that, according to Marxist terminology, (1) "value" *tout court* is opposed to "use-value," while "exchange-value" can be used instead of "value" when reference is made to the actual process of exchange; (2) exchange-value is then the "phenomenal form" of value; (3) use-value is the result of specific, differentiated work; (4) value *tout court* (and exchange-value with it) corresponds to the amount of generic, undifferentiated work performed, and can be approached in terms of "position within a system." This terminology might give rise to misunderstanding owing to the presence of the same term, "value," in different expressions. It has, however, taken such deep root in the relevant literature that it is not possible to change it any longer without raising even bigger misunderstandings. For further details on a possible application of some Marxist categories in semiotics and ethnology, see Rossi-Landi (1974), 2.3.4 and footnote 12, 6.2 through 6.4, and *passim*.

[2] The draft *Grundrisse der Kritik der politischen Ökonomie* [Fundamental traits of the critique of political economy] were written in 1857–1858 and comprehend the real text of the famous "Einleitung of 1857," usually published in a somewhat alterated version as an Appendix to *Zur Kritik der politischen Ökonomie* (1859). They first appeared in Moscow in 1939, but were practically unknown in the Western world until Dietz Verlag of Berlin reprinted them in 1953. Among the first to speak of the *Grundrisse* in English were Hobsbawm (1965) and especially Nicolaus (1968), who must be credited with the first global exposition of the work. An important event for readers limited to the English language is *Marx's Grundrisse*, a short anthology prepared by David McLellan (1971),

that "man is isolated (actually, *vereinzelt sich* "isolates himself") only through the historical process" and that "exchange is one main instrument of this isolation (*Vereinzelung*)" (1953:395, 396; English translation: 96, retouched). Evidently Marx is not talking about mercantile exchange here, because the private producers who come to the market with their goods to exchange are already individuals, perfectly isolated from one another. These are indeed necessary conditions for a market to exist at all. Already in Marx, then, there exist two distinct concepts of exchange: mercantile exchange in the proper sense, limited to the rise of bourgeois and capitalistic society, that is, of a society in which goods are produced *for the market*, which is exchange in a narrow sense; and a more general concept, which refers to any process in which some sort of exchange takes place between men. Mercantile exchange is only one among many types of exchange, even though it is the one through which the general structure of every possible exchange was discovered.

Contemporary anthropological research gives us empirical data on which to articulate a general doctrine of exchange. Let us recall a few points. The nineteenth century idea that primitives dedicated all their forces to mere "subsistence" has by this time been toppled. Already Malinowski

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although the translation may appear flabby to readers familiar with the German text (or even the Italian translation). The most analytical use made of the *Grundrisse* for the purpose of clarifying theoretical issues so far, to my knowledge is Rosdolsky's (1971). Of the complete *Grundrisse* there are a bad French translation by Dangeville in 1967–1968, duly chopped up by Howard (1969), and a painstaking Italian translation by Grillo in 1968–1970 (see listing under Marx 1953). For additional information see Nicolaus (1968) and McLellan (1971).

The publication of the *Grundrisse*, or better their diffusion, has definitively rejoined the "early" or "philosophical" Marx of the *Manuscripts of 1844* — who used to be the object of existential interpretation like Fromm's (1963), or, worse, of shallow pseudoreligious interpretation like Tucker's (1961) — to the "mature" and "scientific" Marx of *Capital*, who, taken in isolation from his previous production, was made the victim of structuralist interpretations like Althusser's (1965), the more misleading the more sophisticated and clever. As Lukács (1923; French translation published against Lukács' will and to his utter dissatisfaction in 1960; Italian translation with a new fifty-page introduction by the author in 1967; English translation in 1971) and Korsch (1966, 1967) had forseen, although they could not have known the *Grundrisse*, several basic characteristics of Marx's thought have now been finally demonstrated by Marx himself. Among these are the gapless *continuity* (which does not imply repetitiveness) of his investigations from beginning to end, the inseparability of his economic analyses and doctrines from the general framework of his vision and from the great tradition of German thought, and his constant use of the Hegelian dialectical method. Of particular interest for our present concern is what is said in the *Grundrisse* about the so-called "Asiatic mode of production" and precapitalist economic formations in general, on the one hand (cf. the text above); and, on the other, about capital when it becomes itself a means of production (cf. Rossi-Landi 1974, 7.3 and 7.4). Once the scope and central position of the *Grundrisse* are duly taken into account, *Capital*, in spite of its magnitude, appears to contain "only" the most profound analysis ever made of one mode of production, historically determined and doomed to disappear; while Marx's whole approach, of which *Capital* exhibits "only" a part, allows of a global interpretation of human history as the reality we first have to cope with whenever we begin to think or to act.

had shown how the property rights of primitive societies formed composite systems (1922: Chapter 3 on the "Kula"; 1929:22–27). We must distinguish between various types of goods, subdivided into heterogeneous categories which vary from case to case. It is only in a mercantile economy that a generalized exchange of all types of goods arises (the consequences of which bring about, with capitalism, a universal mercantilization). In precapitalistic economies, instead (and the more so in primitive ones), various systems of exchange are to be found. What is more, these are noncommunicating systems (Godelier 1969:101–110). While the mercantile system is open, these are "closed" systems. Only one of these closed systems is concerned with subsistence goods; and since these goods, in general, are available to all, the very system within which the market will later be formed is originally subtracted from the dimension of exchange. As Godelier writes:

> Competition within the group begins . . . more often than not beyond the sphere of production and of the appropriation of subsistence goods, and it does not cause the loss of physical existence but that of the social *status* of the individuals. By excluding the problems of access to the means of production [land] and to subsistence goods from the competition between its members, the primitive community guarantees their survival and assures its own physical continuity; while by authorizing competition for the rare goods that give access to women and to authority, it assures its existence as a society (1969:103).

To repeat, primitive societies do not limit themselves to producing goods destined for subsistence. The fact that such goods are common property, or anyhow freely available, eliminates the market in the modern sense. Primitive economies do produce surplus, but this is destined to the support of *social structures other than the market*, which function by means of numerous *forms of nonmercantile exchange.* The productive forces remain what they are, sufficient for the subsistence of all the members of the community. Surplus work is directed toward the production of special goods, which are exchanged in a nonmercantile way.

Now, goods which are not destined to be exchanged on the market are also products of human work. What work produces them? It will naturally be a specific working cycle for each of them as a use-value, that is, differentiated work (at the vanishing point, the "natural" utility of goods must at least have been identified). But, on the other hand, nonmercantile goods are exchanged also: it follows that the dialectic between use and exchange enters into play for these, too. Besides being endowed with a use-value, nonmercantile goods must also possess an exchange-value as the phenomenal form of their value *tout court* (cf. Footnote 1). For nonmercantile goods as well, then, we must refer not only to the notion of differentiated work, of the specific work expended to produce each of

them, but also to that of undifferentiated work, of the portion of such work pertaining to each of them within the system to which they belong, and, more generally, within the widest system, which is made up of all the artifacts produced by the community.

All this permits an important clarification. The continuity between the sign systems already used by prehuman animals and those used by men is not wrongfully broken. It would have been, had we been forced to locate the formation of sign systems too far ahead in social evolution, at a level which was no longer primitive or indeed even no longer primordial. And this would have been inevitable had we been able to talk about exchange only beginning with the formation of an economy which in some way was mercantile. But since prehuman animals can have very complicated sign systems, one does not see why human animals should not have had at least equally complicated sign systems from the start. The point is that there is no need to antedate mercantile exchange, even in an early or immature form, in order to justify the fact that human animals did have such sign systems. The continuity between prehuman animals and human animals is preserved insofar as men continue to be animals and inherit as such the nonverbal sign systems of their biological predecessors. At the same time, the continuity is partially broken, but only and precisely with the advent of work *and with* the institution of various orders of exchange that are not originally mercantile. Work and exchange preside over the formation of consciousness and of language.

THE CROSSING OF VALUES IN EXOGAMIC EXCHANGE

The exchange of women, one of the most important forms of exchange, is basic for the study of kinship systems (Lévi-Strauss 1958, 1967). In this exchange the dialectical crossing of use-values and exchange-values, which was first brought to light by Marx in the analysis of the commodity, is fully realized. Such a crossing is always present whenever exchange occurs, whether mercantile *or nonmercantile*; moreover, it can also be placed at the basis of a study of the formation of sentences (cf. Rossi-Landi 1974, 6). Let us, then, take advantage of the fact that the crossing of use- and exchange-values is easier to understand in the case of women, and explain it in some detail at once.

We shall assume as a paradigm the case of a human male adult who is at the same time potent, heterosexual, and nonincestuous. Let us call him M_1 and examine his social behavior with regard to two categories of women, those who are related to him by blood, and all the others. Let us call these two categories simply, "blood relations" and "other women": by which we understand that every given woman has the property of falling into one category or the other in relation to a given man. Insofar as

he is nonincestuous, M_1 gives up the use[3] of his own mother, sisters, and daughters (as well as grandmothers, aunts, nieces, and other more or less close kin) for sexual purposes. Insofar as he is heterosexual, he uses sexually — or is willing to use, or has used in the past — at least one woman belonging to the category of "other women." Let us look now at another human adult male, also potent, heterosexual, and nonincestuous, and, moreover, not bound to M_1 by any kinship relation. Let us call him M_2 and repeat the same line of reasoning for him. We will find, naturally, that the women who are "blood relations" of M_1 (the ones M_1 gives up) belong to the category "other women" for M_2; while the women who are "blood relations" of M_2 (the ones M_2 gives up) belong to the category "other women" for M_1. For these two men the two categories of women, "blood relations" and "other women," have crossed each other. M_1 gives up his own blood relations and has free access to all the other women, including the blood relations of M_2; and the same is true, symmetrically, for M_2. If we add M_3, M_4, and so on, until we have listed all the men in a given social group who are potent, heterosexual, and nonincestuous, we have the same situation for all: each one gives up his own blood relations and has free access to all the other women, that is, to the blood relations of all the other men.

The situation is worthwhile examining more intimately, in terms of values. What each man of the group gives up when he gives up his own blood relations is their use-value. Now the use-value of women originally lies in the properties, possessed by the female body, of satisfying the man's sexual need and of generating children. These properties, however, cannot be isolated from the ability, acquired by women through enculturation, to carry out services useful to all the members of the group. From the beginning, in fact, everything has become social: even the "values of the female body" appear as social variables, so much so that they differ from culture to culture. And it is not enough to generate children, it is also necessary to submit them in their turn to the specific processes of socialization required by the group. As grown-up members of the community and objects of exogamic exchange, women themselves are complex social products; the use-values they bear come from the specific work with which the community "produces" them.

What is involved here is the notion of the social production of human beings in general. As far as exogamy is concerned, we are dealing with the

[3] It should be clear that in this context, "use" is just a term that occurs in the relevant literature *describing* exogamy and other basic social processes. As such it is a neutral, presexual or postsexual usage, and implies no lack of respect either to the users or to the used. Our approach has nothing to do with petit-bourgeois pseudoproblems concerning such dead issues as the "hierarchy" of the sexes — problems often mystified by metaphysical, or parabiological, or shallow historical jargon, but whose root cannot be other than economic and classist. If the issue were the exchange of men, we would have to describe the ways in which women "use" men in an equally aseptic manner.

social production of *women liable to be exchanged* for the purpose of mating. While it is clear that mateable women are "produced" in an attenuated sense as compared with the production of, say, hunting instruments, the fact remains that if all human beings are social products so are mateable women. Some aspects of the issue to be carefully distinguished are the following: (1) the production of the bodies of human persons is, of course, basically natural; up to a certain point, there is little difference here between various families of mammals; (2) even by nonhuman animals, however, there is at least *some* social production of individuals (cf. Ford and Beach 1965); (3) the social production of human individuals varies enormously in time and space, and is inextricably connected with class struggle (cf. for example Poole's remarks [1971] on the origins of the bourgeois production of women and on the literary myths which try to justify at the ideological level the view of women as part of the material patrimony, etc.).

By giving up his use of his own blood relations, every man of the group makes them available to all the other men of the group as use-values. The blood relations of M_1 are offered to M_2, M_3, and so on, to whom access is given to their use-values. With this giving-up, and this offer, M_1 acquires the right of access to those who are "other women" for him, that is, to the blood relations of M_2, M_3, and so on (cf. Godelier 1969:97–98).

Thus, a nonmercantile exchange has been instituted. In order to bring forth the dialectic more clearly we will reduce the analysis to the most elementary case: let us isolate one female blood relation of M_1, and call her W_1, and one female blood relation of M_2 and call her W_2. The situation is then the following: M_1 gives up the use-value of W_1 in order to be able to enjoy the use-value of W_2, while M_2 gives up the use-value of W_2 in order to be able to enjoy the use-value of W_1. W_1 has acquired a "value" that allows her to be exchanged with W_2, who has in turn acquired a "value" that allows her to be exchanged with W_1.

It is then by crossing the different values, that M_1 and M_2 present themselves in the arena of nonmercantile exchange with W_1 and W_2, and exchange them. We had better say a few more words on this interweaving of values. By permitting W_1 to assume an exchange-value, M_1 suppresses her use-value for him. M_2 does the same with W_2. The whole operation emerges only because W_1 and W_2 are counterposed and exchanged. If W_2, or to be precise, the use-value of W_2, did not exist, desired by M_1, he would not set aside the use-value of W_1; and similarly for M_2, who desires the use-value of W_1 and in order to obtain it sets aside the use-value of W_2. If, in the arena of (nonmercantile) exchange, we use the simple formula of equality, $W_1 = W_2$, in the moment in which we affirm the equality of the two Ws under the aspect of their exchangeability, we can also specify that it is the use-value of W_2 that "cancels" (*auslöscht*, as Marx says) the

use-value of W_1, expressing its "value".[4] If we turn the formula around, that is, if we say $W_2 = W_1$, the use-value of W_1 will cancel that of W_2, with all of the corresponding consequences. The first formula, in fact, expresses the point of view of M_1 as the one who has brought W_1 into the arena of (nonmercantile) exchange; the second expresses the point of view of M_2 as the one who has brought W_2. M_1's end lies in W_2 as M_2's end lies in W_1; and it is just because of this that the process is set in motion which, by crossing the values, leads to exchange.

With this brief analysis we believe we have shown two things. The first is that exchange proceeds directly from work, of which it constitutes a dialectical complication. If work, as Hegel says, is "desire held in check" (1964:238; German edition: 149) so also is exchange, from the time in which it begins to develop as barter. M_1 *gives up* W_1 *in order to acquire* W_2 *through* an exchange. The desire is, at this point, held in check in an institutionalized way. The division of labor has assumed the social figure of a production for others, where the producer prescinds from the use-value of his own products. With the formation of a production for the market, a degeneration of the holding-in-check will take place. The second thing we believe we have shown is that the dialectic discovered by Marx in the analysis of the elementary form of value of the commodity also holds good for the exchange of women, and therefore, we can presume, for other cases of nonmercantile exchange as well. Actually, if we define exchange in terms of a crossing of different values, it follows that some type of crossing must obtain for any exchange to exist, whether mercantile or not.

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[4] "Setting aside," "suppressing," "giving up," and the like, are quasi-synonyms describing various moments of the unitary behavior of M_1 with regard to W_1. "Cancelling," on the other hand, is a specific description of the action exercised by a use-value on another use-value through the dialectical crossing of exchange.

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PART THREE

Primitive Communism as Theory and Critique

The Ethnological Notebooks of Karl Marx:[1] *A Commentary*

LAWRENCE KRADER

It was Marx's practice to fill copybooks with excerpts and notes taken from books he read, joining a running commentary on them. "I am a machine, condemned to devour them, and then throw them, in a changed form, on the dunghill of history," Marx wrote to his daughter Laura in 1868, one year after the publication of *Capital.* He filled hundreds of notebooks in this way, preparing the works he completed or, no less

[1] *The ethnological notebooks of Karl Marx* (Studies of Morgan, Phear, Maine, Lubbock). Transcribed and edited, with an Introduction by Lawrence Krader. Assen: Van Gorcum. 1972. This work contains the transcription of excerpts and notes made by Marx from the following: 1. Lewis Henry Morgan (1964); 2. Sir John Budd Phear (1880); 3. Sir Henry Sumner Maine (1914); 4. Sir John Lubbock [Lord Avebury] (1870).
The excerpts and notes from the first three works are found in Notebook B146, the fourth in Notebook B150, of the International Institute of Social History. The first three sets of excerpts were made by Marx in the winter of 1880 and the first half of 1881, the fourth late in 1882, some four months before his death. In addition to the excerpts from the works listed, Notebook B146 contains excerpts by Marx from the works of J. W. B. Money on Java as a colony, Rudolph Sohm on ancient and medieval law, and E. Hospitalier on practical applications of electricity.
The notes taken from Morgan are on pages 1–98, the notes from Phear on pages 128–155, and those from Maine on pages 160–197 of Notebook B146. The notes from Lubbock are on pages 1–8 of Notebook B150. The note-taking is condensed; the Morgan notes take up 145 pages of printed text. The notes from Lubbock are more limited both in extent and content than the notes made in 1880–1881 but reveal, nevertheless, a remarkable state of mental activity of Marx even at the last stage of his life. D. Ryazanov (1923) incorrectly appreciated the chronology of these sets of excerpts and notes in the last months and years of Marx's life, relative to the energy and acumen with which Marx worked upon them. (See also the German translation of his lectures [1925] given before the Socialist Academy, edited by Carl Grünberg). This is in no way to diminish the services of Ryazanov in editing and publishing the writings of Marx, including those unpublished at the time of his death. Ryazanov in his lecture first called attention to the excerpts by Marx from Maine and Lubbock, in addition to the excerpts from Morgan known through Engels.

A detailed discussion of the contents and chronology of the Notebooks B146 and B150 is given in the Introduction, Addendum 1, of Krader (1972). For documentation and further references, see Krader (1972, 1973a, 1973b, and 1975).

significantly, left unfinished. We are going to discuss two of these notebooks, which are deposited in the International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam, bearing the numbers B146 and B150. The first of these is the most important. The notebooks are octavo, and the paper is of good quality, which has not deteriorated even a century later; they are bound in stiff black boards. Each contains excerpts from several works, and was indexed by Marx.[2]

Despite their good state of preservation the notebooks are difficult to read, for Marx did not have a fair hand; he had failed an examination for a post of railroad clerk, for which he sat during his bad years in England, because of his penmanship. Moreover, his note-taking technique was condensed and polyglott. He abbreviated certain words in a standard manner, such as *u.* for *und*, but some others in an original and unpredictable way: *wahrscheinlich* [probably] was sometimes rendered as *whsclich*, *whrsclich*, *wrslich*, etc. Sentences were frequently paraphrased, and the verbs omitted. He shifted back and forth from English to German in the same sentence. Each page is filled entirely with dense notes in a small hand: he intended the notes for no eyes but his own.

On Marx's death in March 1883, Engels began the task of preparing the publication of Marx's literary remains — the *Nachlass*, bringing out those manuscripts which were in good shape; the best examples of these are the second and third volumes of *Capital* and the concise *Theses on Feuerbach.* The manuscript of the multi-volume work, *Theories of surplus-value*, was left in a less finished state by Marx. Engels left its preparation for the press to Karl Kautsky who published a tentative version, a more definitive one having recently been published in Moscow. The ethnological notebooks were left in an even less developed shape than the foregoing. The first task of their editor has been to reproduce them in print in the exact form in which they were left by Marx, in all the depth and range of their content and the defect of their form. This has been deemed necessary because they have been used for various purposes in the past: a Russian language version of the Morgan excerpts has isolated these from the Maine and Phear excerpts, and has tended to see them through the eyes of Engels, interpreting them in conformity with Engels' usages, and not those of Marx. A West German study of these notebooks has used them as ammunition against the reputation of Engels. It is important to restore the manuscripts to Marx, and to publish them in their own form, as having an intrinsic value.[3]

[2] The notebooks were indexed in another hand as well. Examination of the handwriting has shown that the second index was prepared by Friedrich Engels. This is an important matter, to which we will return.

[3] The publication of the excerpt notebooks in their integral form represents a new method and a new approach to them. In their Russian version they were given the form of normal Russian grammar and vocabulary. They have been interpreted freely. In two cases, concerning other notebooks, the excerpts have been themselves excerpted, so that we have Marx's

All the ethnological materials excerpted by Marx were taken from works on the social evolution of mankind. The authors did not form a coherent school, indeed they were opposed to each other on a number of issues, but all were optimists, believers in the progress of mankind, and thinkers of a speculative bent. The progress they believed in was direct and unilinear, and its lines were broken into stages. There was some disagreement among them about the stages, not about the broad, developmental lines. Morgan alone expressed his dissatisfaction with the current state of civilization, to which that development has conducted us. Maine, Phear, and Lubbock were quite satisfied with the state of civilization as it was known to them, and anticipated its spread to the other peoples of the world. Morgan, Maine, and Phear had a close knowledge of some other civilization than that of the Occident. Morgan was an ethnographer conversant with the Iroquois, who were his neighbors in upstate New York; by profession he was a lawyer for the railroad interests. Maine was the leading figure in historical jurisprudence in Victorian England, having served as a judge in British India. Phear, a follower of Maine, was a natural scientist who had turned to the law and had likewise served in British India and Ceylon. Both Maine and Phear knew British India, particularly its law. Lubbock was an armchair ethnologist, a friend and disciple of Darwin; later made a lord, he came of a banking family.

MARX ON EVOLUTION AND THE RISE OF CIVILIZATION

Marx had long and closely studied the problem of the social evolution of mankind, and in *The German ideology* (1970a) he and Engels had written of the development of the tribe out of the family. Twenty years later, in the first volume of *Capital*, Marx wrote of the "division of labor within the family, further developed within the tribe." This is a change in subject matter from that expressed in the earlier work, for he here refers not to the development of whole institutions, one out of the other, but to the development of an economic practice within them. Engels for his part, in preparing for the press a posthumous edition of *Capital* read Marx's later view still in the light of its earlier expression, for he concluded that Marx had in mind the development of the tribe out of the family.[4] The

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comments and brief indications of the context of these comments. The method which was developed for *The ethnological notebooks* is the only acceptable one, and for these reasons: Marx's dicta in the field of philosophical and empirical anthropology are important to have; they are important per se. Since they are connected with his readings, then his notes on these readings are important to have. The latter may or may not be important per se, but that is not relevant to our purpose, which is to reproduce Marx's thought, what he read, omitted, emphasized.

[4] Engels' note reads: "subsequent very searching study of the primitive condition of mankind that led the author Marx to the conclusion that it was not the family that originally

redirection of the problem by Engels aside, Marx had also expressed himself subsequently in a different way, on the more general problem of family and tribal society, but Engels had not yet determined, as of November 1883, what the difference was. Two months later, early in the new year of 1884, Engels had come upon Marx's ethnological notebooks. He wrote a letter to Karl Kautsky in February 1884 recommending Morgan's *Ancient society* (1964), remarking that he himself had been searching for a copy of it for five weeks, but in vain. Engels had by then evidently come upon the principal ethnological notebook, and had read at least in the Morgan excerpts. He prepared a synopsis of Morgan's views, based on Marx's notes, which he read to Eduard Bernstein at the end of February; Engels found a copy of Morgan's work in March and set about writing *The origin of the family, private property and the state, in the light of L. H. Morgan's researches*, which he completed in May of that year, incorporating about a dozen passages from Marx into his own short book. The entire work of Engels was inspired by Marx, it was, in Engels' words, "the fulfillment of a bequest"; the degree to which it was faithful to Marx can be worked out in the light of the ethnological notebooks.

Marx gained the idea from his reading of Morgan that the gens has the central function in the transition of society from the primitive, undivided condition to political or civil society, that society which is divided into mutually opposed economic classes, under the dominance of the state. The gens is a Latin term for an ancient Roman institution comprising people related to each other by descent in the male line from a common ancestor, whether real, fictive, or mythical. The Romans forbade marriage within the gens; thus the family formed by such marriages was composed of people from different gentes, for it contained at least one member, wife and mother, who necessarily came from another gens. A similar institution and comparable practices are found among the ancient Greeks, and a more distantly related one among the ancient Hebrews, according to Morgan's depictions. Marx concluded that the gens is not simply a development out of the family, nor the family out of the gens. The tribe is a social unity composed of gentes, but is no more a development out of the latter than is the gens a development out of the family.

The gens is formed, at least ideally, by the application of strict rules of descent; appropriate myths and fictive devices, which are consonant with the myth of the founding ancestor and the rules of descent and kinship, are then introduced into the normal life of the gentile society. The family, as we have seen, is composed on the basis of quite different rules and

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developed into the tribe but that, on the contrary, the tribe was the primitive and spontaneously developed form of human association, on the basis of blood relation, and that out of the first incipient loosening of the tribal bonds, the many and various forms of the family were afterwards developed." (Karl Marx, *Capital*, v. I. Quoted from Modern Library edition, 1936, p. 386, Note.) The Engels edition is dated November 7, 1883.

hence cannot combine with other families to form a gens. The tribe is a far more rough-and-ready conception than either the gens or the family, and some anthropologists today acknowledge a difficulty in coming to grips with the term. The term "clan" has come to be substituted of late for gens by a number of anthropologists without substantial change of meaning.

The idea of development in this connection has caused some confusion. The development of the tribe out of the family was conceived by Engels as a sequence of events over a period of time. Some writers, the contemporary structuralists in particular, conceive the relation of family and clan or tribe as a logical development, if they take up the notion of development at all: that is, the one is a necessary condition for the other. The notion of the development of something out of something else over time, which is central to any evolutionary scheme, was directed in Marx's studies of Morgan and Maine at the problem of the emergence of political society out of the primitive/gentile society; it was this formulation which his reading of Morgan uncovered.

Marx's excerpts and notes from the work of Morgan are a straightforward account, as a whole, in which some of the details introduced by Morgan are criticized, but the generality is accepted. In a few cases Marx interpolated points which sum up his position on general method: Morgan had described the relation of the family to the system of consanguinity whereby the family is the active principle, the system of consanguinity the passive, recording, as Morgan wrote, the progress of the family as the latter advances from a lower to a higher form. Marx commented: "So it is with the political, religious, juristic, philosophical systems generally." These are systems, as is the system of consanguinity, and are the passive principle. The active principle, whose progress they record, is that of the economy. Marx had a positive view of Morgan, whose work provided him with a canon whereby he judged that of Maine and Lubbock. On the other hand, he was by no means as impressed with the work of Morgan as was Engels.

THE ASIATIC MODE OF PRODUCTION AND ORIENTAL SOCIETY

In the same notebook are to be found Marx's notes and comments on Phear and Maine. Engels, as we have said, indexed all of them, but concerned himself with Morgan alone. Phear's work is a detailed although generalized account of the village life in what is today Bangla Desh, the region with which he was most familiar. His method was to describe a "type specimen" of a village which existed nowhere but whose conditions of life were presumed to be reproduced in many parts of the region at that time. The term "type specimen" is inappropriate, for he did

not bring forth a specimen but a type. It is likewise inappropriate to conceive of living people as museum pieces on display. The method is rich in details, but is out of keeping with modern fieldwork, being limited by its lack of concreteness in specific reference to any particular village that exists in a given time and place: his object of study existed in fact nowhere, and his conclusions had to be taken on faith for they could not be tested.

Marx went deeply into the study of the Asiatic mode of production, distinguishing it from the mode of production of classical antiquity in Europe, which had slavery as its basis, and the servile mode of production of feudal Europe in the Middle Ages. He sharply criticized inept formulations of Phear and Maxim Kivalevsky who failed to make these distinctions.

The same matter was taken up by Marx in his excerpts from Maine's *Lectures* (1914). Here the positive point is brought out. Negatively we have seen that he separated the Oriental society from the European. Positively we see that the great point for Marx was that the Oriental village is a collectivity in which communal ownership and economic undertakings played a fundamental part in the life of the people, and that the life in the collectivity was not overturned by joining the peasant communities under the dominance of the state in the Orient. The collective life of the villages in the Orient is in a direct continuum with the collective life of primitive society, at the same time constituting a sequel to it, under changed conditions. Engels distanced himself from these matters, holding the ancient civilizations of Asia to have had a form of slavery at their base, hence to constitute a variant of a more general mode of production of which the economies of ancient Greece and Rome constituted another (1972). Marx had developed this position in 1857 and 1858, but he later came to alter it.

Maine had held that Irish, Slavic, Roman, Greek, Indic and Germanic legal antiquities, preserved in the ancient writings and in modern folk practices, elucidated not only the way of life of the Aryan race (Marx at one point burst forth: "The devil take this Aryan cant!") but primitive conditions generally. While Maine's views have methodological weakness and are outmoded, his factual evidence is of interest. In *Lecture* XIII he briefly described the Oriental monarchy, taking as his example that of Runjeet (or Ranjit) Singh, the eighteenth century Sikh ruler in India. This monarch, despotic though he was, did not interfere with ancient custom in the communal life of the villages but contented himself with the extraction of taxes (in kind) and levies of men for his army. And this, continued Maine, was as well the law of the ancient Medes, the Persians, Assyrians, Babylonians, and other Oriental empires; it was only in the later Roman empire that the state first manipulated more intimately the life of the people in the villages by legislative means.

Marx set down the data on the Oriental monarchy which he took from Maine directly. He exclaimed over some exaggeration of emphasis, but in general he responded in a positive manner to Maine's description of India according to his own experience and of the immediately preceding period. Marx, moreover, had a positive response to the theory of the development of law and society from status to contract, which Maine had set down in an earlier work, *Ancient law* (1931). On the other hand, Marx criticized Maine not only for his insensitivity to the political problems and sufferings of the Irish at the time[5] and during the conquest in the Elizabethan and Jacobite periods, but also for failing to keep up with the development of ethnological theory and the collection of ethnographic evidence; Lubbock also criticized Maine on the latter count. Marx rejected the attempts at reconstruction of life in high antiquity in India by both Phear and Maine on the grounds that their efforts were too speculative, and were, moreover, made in accordance with a preconceived notion, which was to prove the advancement of law and society toward the establishment of the English system of Maine's day out of more primitive beginnings, as evidence of which the legal customs in India encountered by the English at the time of their conquest was adduced. These customs included not only the collective ownership of the land by village communities but also impoundment which was compared by Maine to an ancient English practice and suttee or the immolation of widows. Marx, by his reading of Sir Thomas Strange on Hindu law, concluded that the burning of widows alive was in the interest of the priestly caste and of the husband's family. Maine had proposed that the Brahmins' interest in suttee was "purely professional," that is, to guard against a departure from ancient custom which the living widow would accomplish by the enjoyment of her husband's property. According to Strange's account, the priestly caste no less than the husband's family, was anxious that the rite be performed, an anxiety on the part of both which "was, in fact, explained by the coarsest motives."

The excerpts and notes taken from Maine's book contain more in them of Marx's statements than do his Morgan excerpts. He not only recorded what Maine wrote, but attacked him mercilessly for his bland politics. Moreover, Marx expressed his theory of the formation of the state more explicitly in this context than in any other, particularly in relation to the destruction of the primitive communal existence which preceded it, whereby the individual is torn away from the comfortable and satisfying bonds of the collective life. In developing these points, Marx explicitly took issue with the doctrines of the Utilitarian, Jeremy Bentham and of

[5] He protested against the British imposition of a Coercion Bill on the Irish, which permitted the British "to arrest whom they pleased and hold him for as long as they pleased." He then added: "This is written June 1888." He probably meant June 1881.

his cohort in the legal camp, John Austin. Thereby Marx criticized also the doctrine of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, pertaining to the original freedom of man and his subsequent enchainment. According to Marx, mankind is in bondage in the primitive just as much as in the civilized condition. But the bonds of primitive men are *gemuetlich* and satisfying. There is no condition of life in which mankind is free. The primitive man is bound, although in a satisfying and nondespotic way; the civilized man is free in a formal way, by law, but is bound just as much in the substance and content of his life. These considerations should be taken together with Marx's passages about the spring from the realm of bondage into the realm of freedom in the third volume of *Capital*, and likewise with the *Economic-philosophical manuscripts* of 1844; they are all connected with each other and with the passages about human development in *The German ideology,* the introduction to the *Critique of political economy* of 1859 and the *Theses on Feuerbach*. Taken together they provide us with a general view of Marx's view of human nature.

There is a current reason for this adjuration to take into account the late writings of Marx, as they are contained in his ethnological notebooks, in connection with his early writings, in the 1840's. Thereby the estimate of his life and works advanced by Auguste Cornu, the author of a detailed, many-volumed *Life of Marx and Engels*, and by Louis Althusser, the author of a study of *Capital* as an essay in structuralism, are called into question. They are both committed to the thesis that Marx raised the standard of historical materialism in 1846 and that everything he wrote before then is to be cast aside as having no relevance to Marxism. This view is contradicted by Marx himself in his brief Foreword to the *Critique* of 1859. There is both continuity and discontinuity in Marx's work, from the beginning to the end. The powerful themes of his mature years, in the writings of the 1850's and 1860's, are to be understood in terms of what he wrote before and after. We can understand them better, taking into account their extensions into the ethnological field. On the other side, Herbert Marcuse, Erich Fromm and Leszek Kolakowski have emphasized Marx the humanist, as opposed to the active revolutionary, giving likewise a one-sided interpretation to his work.

MARX AND ENGELS AS ETHNOLOGISTS

By the analysis of these excerpts and notes it is easier to determine the views of Marx and to separate them from those of Engels, for, in the case of Morgan's work they covered the same ground. This is an uncommonly pertinent task because the problem has been obscured from different sides: On the one hand the party orthodoxy represented by Auguste Cornu, on the other, the unorthodox C. Wright Mills, have alike regarded

them as one person. But they have not mentioned whether they were writing of the political activism, the scientific concerns, the historical figures, or, which is not the same thing, the historical positions of Marx and Engels. Those who knew them while living, such as Eduard Bernstein, tended to take Engels' estimation of their relations; Max Adler followed in Bernstein's footsteps, and it was not until the 1920's, in the writings of Karl Korsch and Georg Lukács, that the task of separating the two men and their works was undertaken. Korsch ridiculed the dogmatists who made of the work of Marx and Engels, and their putative unity, a matter of church doctrine; Lukács attacked Engels' defective mastery of history. We can say that the matter at issue is the dialectic of theory and praxis: in their praxis, such as in the composition of the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, which was a part of the 1848 revolutions in Europe, and in the organizational work in the 1860's, the two were united. As we move into theory and their respective scientific undertakings, they become clearly separate figures. We cannot accept Lukács' estimate, because it is one-sided, taking up only the theoretical side. Korsch brought out that the two were one in their praxis. The dogmatists have gone too far in identifying their theoretical developments, while the others have likewise erred in forgetting their unity in practice.

The ethnological notebooks are *toto coelo* removed from Marx's praxis, but help us to comprehend it. Since Marx and Engels both took up the same questions covered by the notebooks, we can observe how they differed in theory while affirming their unity in praxis. Thus, both took up the study of the objective and the subjective conditions in the formation of the state. Engels mentions in one chapter of his book (1972) the objective side, or the accumulation of property, while taking up in another the subjective side, or crass greed. He did not bring the two sides together nor take up their interaction, one upon the other. The objective and the subjective conditions and factors in the formation of the state are two sides of a single process, their combination is more than a stylistic or aesthetic device, but the return in writing of that which is there to be written about. Kept apart as they were by Engels, they are but the *disjecta membra* of the same, overarching conception. But more than that; if you are committed, as Engels was to making the dialectic explicit, then of necessity you have got to bring the two sides together, and show them in their passage, one into the other. Marx made this plain in the Morgan excerpts and in another connection in the Maine excerpts. In the latter he wrote of the development and conflict between individual and class interests in the state. The individual has his personal interest, but this can be opposed to his class interest. Thus, a capitalist may sell weapons to a revolutionary cause dedicated to the overthrow of capitalism. The capitalist makes a quick profit but plainly acts contrary to the interest of his class which seeks prolongation of its existence. The state seeks, in one

of its functions, to contain those individual interests which are opposed to those of the class. At the same time, those factors and conditions which gave rise to the state and to opposed class interests also gave rise to unbridled individualism and the self-seeking individuals who pursue none but their private interests. The state is not only the organ of the propertied class for the control of all other social classes, it is just as much the organ of the propertied class for the control of the activities of its own members. The transition from the primitive to the civilized condition, or the formation of the state, which is to say the same thing in another way, is the tearing loose (Marx's term, *Losreissung*) of the individuality from the collective bonds of the group. The village landowners and usurers on a small scale who emerge in the course of this transition are motivated subjectively by simple greed; the objective factor of accumulation of property undergirds this private matter, reinforcing it, and in turn being reinforced by it.

At this point, a separation likewise takes place between public and private social life, between public and private interests, between the official and unofficial organization of society. Morgan had written that the relation of mother and child was assured on the establishment of any form of family but that of father and child only in monogamy. Now according to Morgan's scheme, which well agrees in this regard with that of the *Communist manifesto* (1968) and that of Charles Fourier, the monogamous family is developed only in the period of civilization. Marx interpolated the question: "at least officially?" in noting the point which Morgan made relative to the assurance of the father-child relation. The recognition of an official relation or acknowledgment of such a relation is the product of the division and opposition between an official and an unofficial sphere of social life, the separation of the private from the public interest, and the opposition between them. This arises in the period of civilization, in which, as we have just noted, the monogamous form of family life is developed according to the scheme of Morgan. Public and private are not separate, or not yet, when the people of the village run their own affairs. The separation is accomplished with the rise of an official public life, and of officialdom in the formation of political society. This is not the same as the relation of the subjective and objective factors in human history, which are everywhere to be discerned. The former is the opposition of the public and the private spheres of social life, spheres which are to be found clearly separated by Hegel in his *Philosophy of law*; this opposition is found only in civilized, not in primitive societies, save those that are in the process of transition.

It is no secret that Marx was the more skilled and had the more profound and widely ranging mind of the two. This was already clear to Engels. What is important to know is the way in which they differed. Their different approaches to the dialectic is a good case in point. To

Engels the dialectic is a series of laws, such as the transformation of quantity into quality; this was duly summarized by Engels in his *Dialectics of nature*, and has been duly summarized again by B. Fogarasi and George Movack. But these are purely external and abstract formulations. Hegel and Marx seldom wrote about the dialectic; explicit reference to the term occurs infrequently in the works of Hegel and even less often in Marx. To them the dialectic is an intrinsic, concrete matter, developed in the course of a given, determinate process. It does not float about in the air, to be pulled down when needed. It is above all not a method independent of its subject matter, to which it is then applied; it is inherent in the concrete developments. While Marx devoted his works on *Capital* and *Theories of surplus value* to the study of society and economy of the period of capitalism, he began the study of the earlier epochs in the *Grundrisse*, or *Foundations of the critique of political economy* (1857–1858) where he took up beside the life of primitive peoples the periods of classical antiquity and feudalism in Europe and the societies of Asia. This is the general context of his studies in ethnology and evolution.

MARX ON NATURE AND HUMAN NATURE

In *The German ideology* (1970a) Marx and Engels had held that a biological relation between man and woman for the propagation of children is the division of labor, as we have seen. This sentence was repeated by Engels 40 years later in the *Origin of the family* (1972) but the general position had been abandoned by Marx. Marx, in the first volume of *Capital* (1967) wrote of the *Anfänge der Cultur* [the beginnings of culture]; here the context indicates that he did not allude to the beginnings of agriculture, which would have been the normal use of the term in his time, but to the beginnings of humanity, and the end of the purely natural history of man's ancestors, as the protohuman beings developed into human beings. As Marx had already written in the *Economic and philosophical manuscripts of 1844* (n.d.) the first separation of humanity from nature was accomplished. This is the primary alienation of mankind. Labor is labor in human society, specific to mankind, while the propagation of the species is an activity of all living matter. This is the meaning of labor: as such it is social labor, it is the material interchange with nature — the *Stoffwechsel mit der Natur*.

Mankind, according to Marx, is at once part of nature and separate from nature, his society is at once sensory and suprasensory; Marx included all of humanity within this formulation, without distinction between the primitive and the civilized. Engels, however, took up the notion that the laws of historical materialism, and among them, the preponderance of the economic factors in history, are applicable to

civilized societies alone. He rejected the idea of their applicability to primitive society save in the period of transition to civilization. Within the Marxist tradition he was early criticized therefore by the Social Democrat Heinrich Cunow and more recently by the editors, in the preface to the *Selected works of Marx and Engels*, Moscow (1956). No formulation in this connection other than the affirmation of the cultural and psychic unity of mankind is admissable; any other, which denies this, leads to racism or the division of mankind into fixed and changeless segments. This is untenable from the standpoint of the empirical evidence, politically inimical, and morally repugnant.

The propagation of the human species is, to be sure, the work of men and women; but that is only a part of the account. That propagation is normally the work of husbands and wives, people joined in a socially sanctioned institution forming the basis of family life, whether as monogamy, polygyny, or polyandry. "Hetairism" was introduced into the discussion of the primeval family by J. J. Bachofen and Lubbock, who took the extra-marital relation between men and women, the *hetairai* in the history of ancient Greece, to be a primordial phenomenon; this is the error of anachronism. The biology of sex difference, maturity, and health comprises necessary preconditions for the propagation within the species, but these are transformed by human life in society into cultural conditions. The use of the term "social sanctions" is intended to cover these changed conditions in major part; the use of the term "normal" is intended to cover both the statistically most frequent events, as well as those that are socially sanctioned. Bachofen postulated in his famous book, *Das Mutterrecht* [the matriarchate], the earliest condition of human life to be that in which there was no marriage and no family; mankind lived instead in a horde where sex relations were promiscuous. This thought, though he felt it was necessary, repelled him, and he considered that we are children of a *Sumpfzeugung*, a propagation out of the slime. Bachofen's views on this subject were taken over by Morgan and Engels. Marx criticized these views to the extent that he considered the characterization of slime-propagation to be an ethnocentrism. The idea of such a horde was later taken up by Sigmund Freud, but it has no empirical evidence to support it, and was called into question by Charles Darwin soon after it had been formulated by Bachofen, Lubbock, Morgan, and J. McLennan. Darwin's reasons were based on his observations of wild animals, and while his scepticism is welcome on moral grounds, it is irrelevant to this issue. Communism of living is a matter of the relation between human beings in society, in which their cultural conditions cause the natural urges to be screened and changed. The women of a community are human beings as well as the men, and are related to the men, and to their offspring as human beings. The purely biological, sexual urges are transformed into cultural drives and relations, albeit with a weak or

powerful sexual component within them. Thus, if women are property in certain states, that is not the same thing as the idea of the sexual promiscuity, whether putative or real, of wild animals: economic property is everywhere a socially defined matter, with rights, obligations, inclusions, exclusions, varying from one people to the next. The ideas of common property in women and of sexual promiscuity were tangled up in the early debate, but we are now quite clear that the two are different. Darwin was sceptical of lawlessness and utter social disorder among primates generally, including the human species. That is one issue. The other is whether man is by his nature a social being, in relation to which, the common property of women came to be related. If that is what is to be proved, it will not be proved by attributing to his aboriginal existence a promiscuity, lawlessness, and licentiousness in the sexual possession of the women of the community. The social life of man, the original community of that social life, communal relations and collective ownership will be demonstrated in another way. Man is of the order of nature, which is transformed by man, and man himself is transformed. As human beings we do not abut upon nature directly, but mediately through our technologies and social relations. Finally, the common property of women is equally a confused matter and bears no intrinsic relation to the question of communal relations and the primordial collectivity; its basis in fact is doubtful. Semantically, possession and property are not the same.

Marx in his career had criticized the historical school of law, in particular Gustav Hugo who had postulated as a central premiss a primordial condition of man, a "natural" man. Out of this condition Hugo traced the various existing states of law among the civilized nations. Marx ridiculed this reminiscence of the natural man of Rousseau, of the Dutch primitive painters, of the artificial primitives, the parrot-men in the caricature of Lorenzo da Ponte and Mozart, Papagenos in their feathered costumes. He did not mean the real Iroquois, but their recreation in the fantasies of the Europeans of the eighteenth century. The political economists likewise had taken up this notion, hoping to get at the pure human nature or natural man via a fiction, Robinson Crusoe. One type of criticism of civilization which was developed at that time in Europe proposed that we are not so different from the primitives, that through the clothing of our institutions the savages peep through. But a slit has two ends: the savage peeps at us, we peep at him, and it is ourselves that we see.

One might turn this criticism on its head and derive comfort from the thought: we are not so bad after all. But the slit is a distorting mirror, we are the same and we are changed. The difference is that we have our own problems to solve, and simply to notice that they are general problems of all mankind does not make them eternal, necessary, insoluble: they cannot thereby be fatalistically shrugged off. Moreover, the generality of

the problems is a false issue, for while the primary separation of alienation of mankind from nature is indeed a human universal, the alienation of man in civilized society is not the same thing, while at the same time it is somewhat the same, the same in a distorted way. Civilized humanity is further removed from nature by advancement in technology, by the ever more complex division of labor in society, by life in the midst of large masses of humanity, necessary, for the advanced technology, and for the more complex division of social labor, necessitating the further removal from nature in turn. The alienation of the surplus product from the immediate producer in society is not the same alienation as either of the foregoing, but is directly connected with both, and is a necessary precondition of both, as well as the determinate consequence of the increasingly complex division of social labor and the technological advancement. The alienation of humanity from nature and of human beings from each other go together, for the two types of alienation interact upon each other. Yet the temporal sequence of these relations remains to be worked out in detail.

COLLECTIVISM AND INDIVIDUALISM

The great thought that Marx established, and for which he found support in the ethnological works that he excerpted, is that human life is communal and the collectivity is its fundamental form. The distortion of unbridled individualism had been put forth by Max Stirner, a member of one of the Hegel circles which Marx frequented as a youth at the University of Berlin. Stirner's pure egoism was a caricature of the man of capitalist society. Morgan in the peroration to his work referred to the bewilderment of the human mind before the unmanageable power of property; he further wrote that the interests of society are paramount to those of the individual; and the individual suffers from the effects of the power that subjugates him. Moreover, the career of property is recent, as civilization is recent, and is not our final destiny.

At this time, the Russian socialist, Vera Zasulich, wrote to Marx about the Russian collective village, the *mir*. In a draft of his answer, which he did not send off (*Werke*, volume 19) Marx referred to the writings of Morgan and took him as a witness for the opposing camp, the capitalist order, who nevertheless had brought out that human life was formed in the ancient gentes, and had been subjected to the distortions of civilization, property, individualism. But, Marx added, these are only momentary deviations when measured against the vast extents of geological time in which mankind was evolved on earth and developed himself. Morgan had mentioned the ideals exemplified in the gentes: democracy, brotherhood, equality; he foresaw the next higher plane, free from the bonds of

property, to which society would progress. These are the criticisms of society which are likewise to be found in the writings of the utopian socialists; Marx made mention of Charles Fourier in his notes. The difference between Morgan and Marx is that Morgan posited only what he understood to be the organic movement of human development; there is nothing that Morgan called for that could be done about the achievement of the higher form of liberty, equality, and fraternity of the ancient gentes, whether to speed up the process of transition or to assure its accomplishment. Marx had a concrete critique and an active system to bring about the transformation of society from the present plane to the higher one, whereby the rate of movement and its direction are subject to our control.

MAN MAKES HIMSELF

We have mentioned both the active and the passive factors in the development of mankind to which Marx refers in his ethnological notes. Man is formed by biological and other natural factors; man makes himself in interaction with these. In opposition to this conception of human nature Hannah Arendt has written: "Nothing is more obvious than that man, be it as a member of the species or as an individual, does not owe his existence to himself . . ." But this is a highly reduced, one-sided conception of the development of humanity. Arendt introduces two frames of reference for the discussion of the factors to which man owes his existence: the species and the individual. What is excluded is a series of interactions, on the one side between species and individual, on the other between both of these and the natural surroundings. Further, nature is both within, in the human organism, and without, in the earth, air, and water around us. A third frame of reference has also been thereby excluded: it is the relations of the individual to the *particular* society that he is raised in and lives in. It is by the combination of these relations, in which the human individual is now the active, now the passive factor, that man makes himself, or, to use Arendt's words, that man owes his existence to himself. The human species does not exist as far as the individual member of it is concerned, save as an abstraction. We may add an "alas!" to this, or express the hope that one day the abstraction will become a concrete reality. The immediate society, the neighborhood, community, its institutions, the wider institutions of government, law, the state, etc. exist only in their concretion. These shape the individual, as he gives them their material substance. Without the society the individual would not exist, without the individuals, the society would not exist.

Man, declared Adam Ferguson two centuries ago, is the artificer of his fame and fortune; art is natural to man, he wrote, prosaically paraphras-

ing Shakespeare. We do not come into contact with nature directly, but cause our artifice to intervene between ourselves and nature. The artifices are various, according to the different customs and practices of the different human societies; hence our nature is various. Anthropologists have sought to sum up this idea of the indirect relation of man with nature under the term "culture." Now culture is a human product, and solely a human product. Further, we make culture, not in general, but in particular. We make, in each human society, our own culture. That culture in turn shapes the individuals within it; that which we have produced in turn shapes both our material and our spiritual mode of existence. In this sense we make ourselves, not in general, but in particular, in our variety. Indeed, our variety is formed thereby.

We are formed by natural forces of gravity, sunlight, materials of the earth and air. We do not shape those forces, any more than we shape the forces of evolution whereby it was brought about that the human species was differentiated, in the particular form that we have, from among the other mammals and among the other primates. But as we trace out the era in which mankind emerges, we note the increasing intervention by his own artifice of protoman, early man, and contemporary man, in the shaping of his relations to the natural environment, by increasing the dominance over his environment. In this sense we owe our existence to ourselves. Having brought out this, the self-making factor, we then return it to the interactive process. In fact, the caricature of the self-made man of the business world arises precisely because the interaction was lost to view. We owe our existence to our nature, and to the surrounding nature without which we could not exist but which we have made our own, appropriated, regulated, controlled, dominated, and sullied, in accordance with our partially and inefficaciously controlled energies. We have turned our cultural devices, which we owe only to ourselves, to our self-destruction and the destruction of our surroundings. Indeed we owe our existence, or what we have made of ourselves, to ourselves and to no other.

That the communal life of mankind is our primitive condition was the thesis of Otto Cierke, Henry Maine, Maxim Kovalevsky, L. H. Morgan, Emile Durkheim, later of Henri Bergson and Joseph Kulischer. It was opposed by Fustel de Coulanges, Friedrich Ratzel, later by Heinrich Schurtz, Alfons Dopsch, more recently by Carl Stephenson. Both Auguste Comte and Herbert Spencer occupied ambiguous positions in the debate. Marx traced out the collective beginnings of mankind, whereby the scientific and the political aspects of the conception, and of the opposing sides, were inseparable. Moreover, the idea that the collective life in society was not only a necessary condition of the origin of human existence but also a necessary condition of human life today is a part of a further debate. Man, according to Marx is in interaction with

society; each is a necessary condition for the other. But for earlier thinkers, in the school of natural law and the social contract — Grotius, Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Rousseau — man exists prior to society, and forms it for purposes of his own. According to Marx, the development of mankind out of the communal and collective condition of social life into the condition of individualism is the product of the disruption of the ancient collective institutions, the formation of political society, and of the opposed social classes. Marx actively opposed the civilized condition of society, he investigated the scientific materials which demonstrated that this condition of opposition and individuality is a temporary distortion of a more basic condition of equality and brotherhood of man. At the same time Marx made it clear that the doctrine of individualism emerges out of a social process; it is a political doctrine developed in political society, based upon the emergence of the individual who has been torn loose from the collectivity. The doctrine of individualism, of Thomas Hobbes' war of each against all, of the free market, of *laissez-faire*, of egoism, comes later, expresses this matter as a political ideology, as an interest of a small group of people who profit from it. The doctrine is at first separate from, then converges with, the loosening of the individual from the bonds of the collectivity, coming to the defence of the act of loosening. This defence was the mission of Herbert Spencer and Henry Maine. Marx disclosed the connection between the ideology and the fact, at the same time showing the emptiness of the method: the political ideology and the scientific fact are inseparable, there is no objective, pure science of society.

Man is inseparably a part of society, society is a part of the human individual; there is no abstract individual free of all social relations. On the contrary, everything of human concern is done within a given society, nothing outside it. This is a doubly important point, no less for itself than for the understanding of Marx's activities. Politically he engaged in a struggle against capitalism: he was at the same time sharply opposed to the anarchists, Mikgail Bakunin in particular. It is commonly supposed that the struggle with the anarchists arose in the conflict within the working class movement of the 1860's and 1870's. That is the practical side of the picture. The theoretical side is that the anarchists saw only one opposition, a simple one: the individual and the state; yet to Marx such a thought was not only simple but dangerous. In the notes which he took from Haine's *Lectures* he wrote of "society and its state." The state is an important center of activity, but it does not occupy the entire field and is not always of primary importance in the revolutionary struggle against capitalism or in the study of society and economy in the capitalist period. The state is a creature of the society in which it is found. The views of the anarchists Bakunin and Kropotkin, in this connection, are shown to be superficial and naive; they failed on the one hand to comprehend the

relations between the society in the period of capitalism and its form of the state, and the relations between that society and its formation of the individual on the other. The programmatic thought of Spencer, who was in no way an anarchist, was not far from the anarchist program in directly opposing man and the state; the sociological element in Spencer's thought in this connection is weak. Anarchist and capitalist doctrines of the relation of individualism and the individual to the society in the capitalist period are joined in defence of freedom. But that freedom, in the absence of a social theory and of a program of change of relations in society, is a purely formal notion. Marx stood opposed to both the capitalist and anarchist doctrines. His program of social change as it is outlined in the *Communist manifesto*, is known on the level of praxis: *The ethnological notebooks* will make clear the outline of his theory of the development of mankind and the evolution of society, relative to the praxis. A guide to current and actual problems of society will not be found therein; we can only work this out for ourselves.

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The Position of the Primitive-Communal Social Order in the Soviet-Marxist Theory of History

STEPHEN P. DUNN

This paper is part of a much larger work in which the Soviet-Marxist theory of history, as it relates to the precapitalist periods, will be set forth and critically analyzed on the basis of relevant historical and anthropological data, and the history of the theory itself will be traced. By the "Soviet-Marxist theory of history" I understand an extremely broad hypothesis which specifies the factors determining the form taken by human society at various historical periods, and the nature of the forces that have caused this form to change. This hypothesis was laid down in its main outlines by Marx and Engels during the last century, and has been developed by Soviet scholars in recent decades. My use of the prefix "Soviet" signifies only that I do not consider, except incidentally, the work of Marxist scholars in the West, in China, or in Eastern Europe.

The Soviet-Marxist theory of history differs from other hypotheses in social science in two significant respects in addition to its extraordinary scope: by its organic connection with a specific political program; and by the fact that, in one form or another, it constitutes "accepted doctrine" in the Soviet Union and in some other socialist countries. The latter point means that all research in social science is conducted in terms of this hypothesis, and that all candidates for advanced degrees are required to master it as part of their formal training. These facts give the Soviet-Marxist theory of history an importance both intellectual and practical

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which far exceeds that of any other current theory in the field. It is both strange and regrettable that no systematic analysis of this theory as a whole has been undertaken, to my knowledge, by anyone outside the Soviet Union, and that polemics have taken the place of scholarly discussion on both sides of the ideological barrier.[1]

My immediate concern here is with the primitive-communal social order, which represents, in the Soviet-Marxist view, the initial stage of human history out of which all the others develop. However, before addressing myself to this topic, I should introduce the concept of the social order, which is the fundamental tool of the Marxist method of historical analysis. For Marxists, the social order is a historical stage characterized by a particular form of society, through which all or a significant part of mankind (with exceptions and variations which in turn must be historically accounted for) have passed or is now passing. Each social order has "laws of motion" — forms and mechanisms of change and development — peculiar to itself. Each contains both the remnants of the previous orders and the undeveloped seeds of future ones.

Each social order, in turn, contains two major classes of phenomena: the "base," consisting of all the means and methods — material, intellectual, and organizational — by which people exploit their physical environment and obtain the means of subsistence from it; and the "superstructure," consisting of the juridical and political relationships, philosophical and religious ideas, artistic methods, and the like, characteristic of a particular stage of social development. Broadly speaking, the character of the base determines that of the superstructure, but there is a feedback, the effect of which is particularly marked at advanced stages of social development.

The relationships between people which arise in the course of the production of material goods, and which prevail at any particular time and place, are designated collectively as a "mode of production." For antagonistic social orders — those characterized by the presence of classes whose economic interests are directly opposed to each other, and whose interrelations are marked by exploitation (this includes all social orders between the primitive-communal at one end of the course of historical development and the communist at the other) — the mode of production includes such factors as the system of rules governing ownership of the means of production, and the means by which the surplus

[1] This is not meant to disparage the work of the many scholars (Marcuse, Acton, Lichtheim, R. C. Tucker, and others) who have analyzed and criticized various aspects of Marxist doctrine from various points of view. All these people deal with dialectical materialism or with Marx's own philosophical system, which are essentially untestable and can only be accepted or rejected, or at best subjected to an "immanent critique." The treatment I have in mind applies to a different aspect of Marxist thought, and is of a fundamentally scientific rather than philosophical nature.

product is taken from the immediate producers for the benefit of the ruling class.[2]

The successive modes of production are described by Marx as follows in his Introduction to *Toward a Critique of political economy*: "In broad outlines, we can designate the Asiatic, the ancient, the feudal and the modern bourgeois methods of production as so many epochs in the progress of the economic formation of society" (Selsam and Martel 1963:187). It should be noted that Marx in this passage omits any mention of the primitive-communal social order, as he omits mention of the classless society of communism which did not exist at the time he wrote. In my view, this is not accidental. As we shall see, primitive-communal society lacks most of the structural elements which were listed above as going to make up the mode of production; in fact, in the late 1920's, there was a lively debate among Soviet scholars as to whether primitive-communal society should be considered a social order in the Marxist sense at all.

The precapitalist modes of production are described as follows by Mandel (1969:34–35):

> 1. *Primitive-communal*: . . . a primitive gathering, fishing and hunting economy, in which success is possible only if all cooperate, and in which the results are so meager that they must be shared approximately equally to avoid death by starvation by some, which would endanger the survival of all by making the entire group too small and weak to function and defend itself.
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> 2. *Asiatic or Asian*: a system . . . in which these communal groups remain, but chieftains, ruling clans, or priest-kings emerge, who perform trading or military or irrigation-directing functions for the whole, and to obtain the material means of life through taxes exacted more or less voluntarily from the communes.
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> 3. *Ancient or Classical or (in current Soviet usage) Slaveholding*: . . . in which the world's work is done by slaves and the slave-owners may philosophize or fight or whatever at leisure.
>
> 4. *Feudal*: . . . in which the ultimate producer is, in the classical sense, a serf, part of whose time must be given to work for his lord and part . . . remains to him to till his own soil.

From the description given here we may conclude that in regard to primitive-communal society both production and consumption are carried out in common; there is no private ownership of the means of production; and there is no exploitation — that is, removal of the surplus product (that part of the product which is not immediately necessary to sustain life) from the person who has produced it — because there is in fact no surplus product.

One of the most important elements in the Marxist model of the evolution of society is the mechanism by which one social order changes into another. This element provides the motive force for the process as a

[2] For a lucid and useful discussion of major issues in Soviet-Marxist ideology as it relates to social science, see Mandel (1969).

whole. Marx, in the Introduction to *Toward a Critique of political economy* sets this matter forth as follows:

> In the social production which men carry on they enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will; these relations of production correspond to a definite stage of development of their material powers of production. The sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society — the real foundation, on which rise legal and political superstructures and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. . . . At a certain stage of their development, the material forces of production in society come in conflict with the existing relations of production, or — what is but a legal expression for the same thing — with the property relations within which they had been at work before. From forms of development of the forces of production these relations turn into their fetters. Then comes the period of social revolution (Selsam and Martel 1963:186–187).

The word "revolution" implies that a new set of relations of production comes into being, usually as the result of a more or less sudden and violent change. The notion of the suddenness and violence of this change derives from the dialectical component of Marxist philosophy, which is beyond our area of concern here.

Thus, taking the Marxist theory of history as a whole, we find that it assumes that the form taken by human society is determined ultimately by the prevailing system (both technological and organizational) for the production of material goods.

The debate relative to the primitive-communal social order has, throughout its course, revolved around two major points: first, the nature of the motive force of social evolution *within* the primitive-communal period; second, the motive force and the character of the social changes leading from the primitive-communal social order into the following one, whether this is thought to be feudalism, classical slaveholding, or the Asiatic mode of production. For reasons of both space and time, I will deal here only with the first of these issues. By the same token, I am reserving for a later occasion discussion of the so-called "labor theory" of human evolution, proposed by Engels and more recently developed and argued about at great length by Semenov and others, which asserts that collective experience in the production of material goods was the main motive force in the physical evolution of *Homo sapiens.*

Engels (1940) recognizes two factors determining the structure or form of human society — the production of material goods, or generally of the means of subsistence, and the reproduction of human beings.[3] It is signifi-

[3] "According to the materialist conception, the determining factor is, in the last resort, the production and reproduction of immediate life. But this itself is of a twofold character. On the one hand, the production of the means of subsistence, of food, clothing and shelter, and of the tools requisite therefor; on the other, the production of human beings themselves, the

cant that in terms of formal Marxism this latter, although it is a form of production and although its results are certainly material, does not constitute "material production" in the strict sense because it does not involve the transformation of materials found in the environment through the application of labor. Engels considered biological reproduction (which has its reflection in kin relationships between people, just as the production of material goods is reflected in such institutions as rent, serfdom, private property, and wage labor) to be the major factor determining the structure and development of society during the primitive-communal period.[4]

This proposition was apparently put forward in an attempt to accommodate the ethnographic fact that the clan or descent group, whether matrilineal or patrilineal — which Engels, following Morgan, and all Marxist theorists after him until very recent years, have considered the basic social institution of the primitive-communal period — is not, and by definition cannot be, an economic or residential unit. The clan, according to the strict definition, includes only the descendants of one particular individual in either the male or the female line; any residential or economic unit, on the other hand, must include at a minimum the spouses of its members. Engels appears to have posited a second independent form of material relationship with its own laws and mechanisms in an attempt to escape from this apparent contradiction.

Engels' position did not go unchallenged. He was assailed for "dualism" and inconsistency by certain other early Marxists, such as Kautsky and Plekhanov, who were afterwards wholly or partially repudiated from the Soviet point of view.[5] It is interesting to note, however, that neither Engels' prestige nor the repudiation of Kautsky, and in part Plekhanov,

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propagation of the species. The social institutions under which men of a definite historical epoch and of a definite country live are conditioned by both kinds of production; by the stage of development of labor, on the one hand, and of the family, on the other. The less the development of labor, and the more limited its volume of production and, therefore, the wealth of society, the more preponderantly does the social order appear to be dominated by ties of sex" (Engels 1940:1–2).

[4] It must not be thought either that Engels conceived, or that any present day Soviet scholar conceives, of the primitive-communal period as one specific span of time, uniform the world over. The expression refers merely to the period in the history of any given society which preceded the appearance of antagonistic classes in the formal-Marxist sense.

[5] Kautsky's writings on this point are at present unavailable to me. However, from the tenor of Engels' replies, it would appear that during the first stage of the debate Kautsky was arguing against Engels' assumption that the primeval human group was characterized by complete sexual promiscuity or "community of women," rather than dealing directly with the general issue of the principle — whether economic or biological — upon which primitive-communal society was organized. (See Engels' letters to Kautsky, February 10 and March 3, 1883, in Marx and Engels 1961–1970:vol. 35, pp. 432–433 and 445–447). Nevertheless, these letters and subsequent ones on the same subject are cited by Soviet polemicists of the early 1930's — e.g. Ravdonikas (1935:146 ff.) — against the economic interpretation of the structure of primitive-communal society, and against the assertion that the biological principle propounded by Engels involved any dualism whatever. The point is

as Marxist authorities, sufficed to settle this point, even within the Soviet Union. Throughout the 1920's and the early 1930's, there were repeated attempts to uphold the economic role of the clan, and thus the primacy of economic factors as over against "biological" ones in primitive-communal society. Accordingly, there were repeated arguments against this point of view in the name of Marxist orthodoxy. For example,

> . . . from the point of view of dialectical [and not economic] materialism, the opinion of Marx and Engels on the question of the relationships arising from the "production of children," [reference is to the primacy of kinship as a structural determinant in primitive-communal society] does not introduce any dualism at all into the monistic understanding of history, which remains unchangeably materialistic, since relationships in the production of children are also material relationships. Furthermore, they also are subjected, in the final analysis, to the development of the productive forces, since family and kinship relations in preclass society either coincide or are closely intertwined with relationships in the production of material goods and can be understood only in connection with these latter (Ravdonikas 1935:161).

The following quotations reveal more clearly the political significance of these disputes.

> From all that has been said above, it is clear that in the question of family relations in preclass society [coextensive with primitive-communal], there existed in pre-war social democracy two tendencies: Engels and Lenin (and in part Luxemburg) on the one hand, and Cunow and Plekhanov on the other. Can there be any discussion as to which of these tendencies Soviet historians must associate themselves with? The point is, that the Cunow-Plekhanov theory of *direct reduction of family relationships in primitive society to the economic relationships contemporary with them* inevitably leads to the denial of the existence of primitive communism itself (Krichevskij 1934:39–40).

> The paired family of primitive communism was not an economic unit, and the paired family of the highly developed *communism of the future* will not become one. The denial of primitive communism or the economic interpretation of the nature of the paired family is merely the reverse side of the denial of the possibility of building communist society, in which "individual sexual love" and by no means economic interests will be the basis of marriage (Krichevskij 1934:54).

Vlasov (1962) describes the prevalence of the economic interpretation of the structure of primitive-communal society during the 1940's and 1950's (and hence the repudiation of Engels' views in this regard) as a consequence of the Stalin cult. He quotes the official foreword to a 1947 edition of *The origin of the family, private property, and the state* and a

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important, because in the Soviet Union at that time anyone who expressed doubts as to primitive promiscuity was held to be asserting that the nuclear family was coeval with human society as such, and hence to be guilty of "theoretical-Menshevist" deviation. In the opinion of many, the same was true of anyone who undertook to explain the structure of primitive-communal society in economic terms.

standard dictionary of philosophy published in 1945 — neither of which I have yet seen — as stating flatly that the passage quoted in Footnote 3 is in error. All this makes a rather odd impression when compared with the material just quoted from Ravdonikas and Krichevskij. If it can be verified, however, what Vlasov says will make an interesting illustration of one of the properties of ideology under certain conditions — a requirement of internal consistency so strong that it can lead to the repudiation, not just reinterpretation, of part of the base text.

When we pass from the early 1930's to the late 1960's, we find that the topics of argument among Soviet anthropologists relative to the primitive-communal social order remain unchanged, although the specific arguments advanced are now different. For example, Semenov attempts to reconcile the idea that economic relations fundamentally determined the structure of primitive-communal society with the clan as its basic social institution by positing the existence at some remote time of so-called "dyslocal marriage" in which a sexual union did not give rise to a new residential or economic unit. As Soviet commentators have pointed out and as Semenov himself freely admits, the ethnographic evidence for this is indirect and ambiguous — though it does exist. Certain episodes in Greek myth — for example, the story of the Amazons — appear to refer to dyslocal marriage; and customs which exist, or did until very recently, in the Caucasus and in the mountains of Greece (see Aglarov 1965; Smirnova 1962, 1974; Campbell 1964) can plausibly be interpreted as survivals of it. It seems clear that Semenov is bothered, as his predecessors were, by the prospect of admitting that during so large an extent of human history as the primitive-communal period, the structure of society was governed by a principle entirely different from that which operated during later epochs.[6] For a detailed exposition of his point of view, see Semenov (1966, 1968).

Another attempt to deal with the problem of the factors determining the structure of human society in the primitive-communal period has been made by a group of Soviet scholars (N. A. Butinov, V. M. Bakhta, and V. R. Kabo) whose views are sharply opposed to Semenov. They proceed essentially by throwing overboard the primary status of the clan in primitive society and substituting, as basic unit, the "commune" — a

[6] In an earlier paper (Dunn, 1973) I called attention to this difficulty, but stopped short of explaining it fully. I said there: "If the prime motive force in the evolution of human society is held to be one thing over the immense span of time and the vast range of empirical conditions covered by the primitive-communal social order, and something quite different during all other periods and under all other conditions, then the status of historical materialism as a *general* theory, claiming to explain the entire process by reference to some *single* mechanism (however broadly understood), will be in serious jeopardy." When this was written, I was still unaware of the extent of the discussions on this point among Soviet scholars during the 1920's and early 1930's. I would now be inclined to defend the same position on rather more specific grounds, as I will do below.

group which includes, besides a nucleus of persons related by blood in the male or female line, their spouses and perhaps also outsiders who have been adopted.[7] The three scholars just mentioned validate their point of view by a rather careful survey of empirical data from Australia, New Guinea, Indonesia, and to some extent the southeast Asian mainland, largely from English-language sources. From the point of view of traditional Marxism, this constitutes a solution of the problem as radical in its own way as Semenov's because it decisively separates economic relationships from those based on blood kinship. My impression is that had the Butinov-Bakhta-Kabo point of view been put forward in the 1930's, it would have been immediately denounced as "theoretical Menshevism," inasmuch as the commune based on a nucleus of kinfolk which these authors describe is obviously a further development from the extended family and therefore ultimately from the individual family — an idea for which in their time Cunow and Kautsky were anathematized (for detailed references to the works of Butinov et al. see Danilova 1971:310–311; see also Butinov 1968 and Kabo 1968). However, the theory being discussed here also presents more serious and less politically motivated difficulties from a traditional Marxist point of view. Danilova's comment (1971:377) is revealing in this regard:

> An important component of the new concept is the recognition of the fact that the paired family developed considerably earlier than is customarily believed.[8] But this approach requires a re-examination of hypotheses that maintain that there was a long period of "group marriage," and of the role of natural selection in evolution of familial life and marital relationships.

In other words, the theory under discussion would require an emendation of Engels' model (taken over from Morgan) much more significant than the minor factual corrections of Morgan and Engels which Semenov was prepared to admit over a decade ago (1965).

Finally, Engels' original position — that the forces determining the

[7] This must be carefully differentiated from the territorial commune or "commune of neighbors," as exemplified in the traditional European peasant village, and also in similar groups in ancient China, Egypt, and Mesopotamia. In the Soviet view the "commune of neighbors" (Russian: *sosedskaja obshchina*) no matter how ancient is always a development from the earlier kin-based commune. The latter in turn differs fundamentally from the clan, in that it is composed of conjugal families, which the clan cannot be.

[8] A footnote inserted by Danilova at this point reads: "This interpretation of the role of the family in the primitive period, of course, has nothing in common with the patriarchal theory dominant in the mid-19th century, which held that the family was the initial social institution out of which first the clan and the tribe, and then the state, developed" (1971:311). Danilova is aware of the difficulty which I have just mentioned but passes it off with the disclaimer which, as is usual in such cases, is given without argument. One might speculate as to the argument that could be made here: The "clan" is a mere regulatory mechanism and has no corporate existence in the economic sense; therefore it has nothing in common with any kind of family.

structure of society were different during the primitive-communal period from what they were at later times — is upheld by N. B. Ter-Akopian, a specialist in "Marxology," but not, to my knowledge, in anthropology.[9] Once again, Danilova's comment on this (1971:281–282) is significant:

> In a certain sense, the theory just described is a direct continuation of the one that denies any connection between the process of sociogenesis and the appearance of productive activity. From the viewpoint of this theory, it is difficult to detect the difference between the regularities operative in the horde [the human group before the origin of specifically social institutions] (where the dominance of the production of man over the production of material goods must have manifested itself considerably more sharply) and the regularities of social development during the stages involved. In this concept the line of demarcation between the primitive herd [Russian: *stado*; essentially the same as "horde"] and fully formed human society actually disappears. In addition, it is not clear how consanguine relations, in their social functioning, differed from the natural and biological relations that existed among man's animal ancestors. The theory in question, while a natural reaction to that elevation of the economic factor to an absolute which has for so long characterized our social science, essentially reduces to zero the role of this factor in the development of preclass society.

I should remind the reader once again that the viewpoint to which Danilova here gives such short shrift stems directly from Engels.

The comments that follow are those of one who considers himself a Marxist in a broad theoretical sense, but admits no specific allegiance to any of the existing, entrenched points of view. It seems clear that among Soviet scholars presently active, Engels' distinction between kinship as the factor determining the form of primitive society, and economic relationships as playing the same role in all other periods, is looked upon with suspicion if not with distaste. At any rate, the recent public record which we have examined shows numerous attempts to sidestep or supersede this distinction, and only Ter-Akopian, a layman in this specific field, maintains it consistently. It is my impression that the generally suspicious attitude of Soviet scholars toward Engels' formulation of this matter represents sound judgment for the following reason: while it is true that

[9] "The main stages of which Engels speaks are wider than social orders or formations [Russian: *formatsii*; this term has usually been rendered as "social orders" in this paper]; it is, for example, obvious that the stage of civilization embraces slaveholding, feudal, and capitalist formations, and possibly also the formation based on the Asiatic mode of production. The two preceding stages — at least up to the middle stage of barbarism, inclusive [The periodization is taken from Morgan by way of Engels; the middle stage of barbarism would correspond to shifting slash-and-burn agriculture (Morgan 1964:10)] are defined in Soviet historical scholarship as the primitive-communal socioeconomic order or formation. At the same time, as Engels already thought and as the data of our times confirm, economics and economic relationships did not play the decisive role until the middle stage of barbarism. The conclusion from this can be only one: these stages, in our view, cannot be characterized as a socioeconomic formation. They can only be characterized as a social formation in which communistic relationships of the clan structure prevailed" (Ter-Akopian, 1968:86).

relationships arising from the reproduction of human beings are also material relationships, it does not follow that a kinship system can be equated with a mode of material production. At least in the absence of a clear demonstration that a particular kinship system confers a biological advantage, kinship must be considered an ideological phenomenon in the Marxist sense. It is not subject to the same kind of analysis as a particular economic system which can be conceptually divorced from its ideological overlay. That is, one can say, after analyzing the matter, who gets the proceeds of a particular economic transaction and who if anyone is exploited. However, in the case of kinship, where sexual behavior or the production of children is regulated by certain ideas that exist in people's minds, one would have great difficulty in separating the objective nature of the phenomenon from what the ideology says about it. Therefore, it is my view that the dualism sensed by certain early Marxists in what Engels said about the motive force of primitive-communal society is real.

The significance of this dispute is obvious. It makes a great deal of difference what the motive force for the evolution of society is — whether it is one thing or two separate things or a congeries of unspecifiable factors — and what determines the form of human society at particular historical periods. The fact that ethnography is of only very limited help in elucidating the phenomenon of the true primitive-communal period and that any reconstruction has to be largely speculative, does not exempt us from working on the problem unless we are willing to abandon the idea of historical law altogether. As I hope to show elsewhere, this would have philosophical consequences both far-reaching and disastrous.

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Class, Commodity, and the Status of Women

ELEANOR LEACOCK

This paper attempts neither consistent documentation nor proof. Instead it is hortatory and explorative. I want to put forth the proposition that the continued separation of woman's position from the central core of social analysis, as an "and," "but," or "however," cannot but lead to continued distortions. This might be so because of the simple fact that women constitute half of humanity. The point I want to suggest here however, is that the notion of a somehow separate "woman's role" hides the reality of the family as an economic unit, an institution as crucial for the continued exploitation of working men as it is for the oppression of women. To understand this family form and its origins is fundamental to the interpretation of social structure, past and present, and to the understanding of how to fight for and win the right of the world's people to make decisions about their future. Relegation of family forms to secondary questions about "woman's role" has hindered us in our search to comprehend the origins of class society, the dynamics of its perpetuation, and the shape of its full negation.

The same has been true of racial and national oppression, for they have also been relegated to the status of secondary issues in contemporary Marxist analysis, with serious consequences, both theoretical and political. Before developing my central point concerning family forms and their relevance to the interpretation of history, I should like to review this parallel problem briefly.

As Marx pointed out, it was the expansion of the European market into the world market that transformed mercantile Europe into capitalist Europe. Historically, then, capitalism has been inseparable from racist brutality and national oppression throughout its history. Yet few Western scholars have chosen to explore all the ramifications of this connection. Marx unveiled the mystery of commodity production and the fetishism of

money; he revealed the process whereby direct relations among people, as they labored to produce and to exchange the goods they then consumed, were transformed by the emergence of commodity production for profit, so that people's very labor became an alien force against them. In other words, Marx analyzed the nature of exploitation itself as a principle, and as a principle it was and is colorless, raceless, and sexless.

However, in the course of organizational failures and confusions, exploitation somehow became defined as centrally of whites and of men. Seduced by the divide-and-rule ploys that are constantly generated from the competitiveness inherent in capitalist structure and that are consciously reinforced by the servants of the powerful as well, scholars and self-styled revolutionaries, white and male, accepted the bribe of pitiful involvement in personal and petty oppression, and, bemused, analyzed society in their image, including the very nature of exploitation itself. The unifying power of the concept was destroyed by the hardening into dogma of a pernicious dichotomization, whereby the exploitation of the industrial worker, white and male, was pitted against the compounded exploitation and cruel oppression of the nonwhite as well as the nonmale.

The theoretical separation of class exploitation from other forms of oppression contributed to the tragic undermining of a revolutionary socialist movement in the United States following World War II. Black revolutionaries were forced to divide themselves in two, to dichotomize the oppression of their people through ritual statements that their exploitation as workers was more fundamental than their oppression as blacks. Thereby the special and powerful anger of black people was defined as inherently counterrevolutionary. I remember a black woman comrade, years ago now, saying, "I don't care what they say, *first* I am a Negro [the term "black" being then still a term of abuse], *then* I am a worker." Her third identity, powerfully adding to the totality of her oppression, hence her potential as a revolutionary, that of a woman, she did not even express, so submerged then was such identification in the idiocies of a theoretically sterile organizational politicking. To pit national or racial oppression against class exploitation is a sophomoric sociological enterprise; it is not Marxist analysis. That people of color can fall across class lines — a few of them — has befuddled our thinking insofar as we are metaphysical and not dialectical. Class exploitation and racial and national oppression are all of a piece, for in their joining lay the victory of capitalist relations.

To pursue this line of criticism in a more academic context, consider the extent to which United States history has been written as the history of white men. The contribution from the left has mainly been to stress that the black experience must be added. Recently, some American Indians, and now women, are being tacked on as well — as if it were a matter of merely adding these extras to make the whole, rather than a matter of

fundamental rethinking. Consider also how the history of capitalist development has been written as if wholly white, deriving almost totally from internal European processes. Relations with Africa, Asia, and the New World are seen as extras, as gravy, unimportant until quite late when they set off Europe's final imperialist explosion. It is agreed that the English capital which made industrialization possible was derived in major part from the triangular trade in slaves, rum, and sugar (produced in what were models for European factories, the sugar mills of the Caribbean plantations), and then the significance of that fact is forgotten. W. E. B. DuBois and Eric Williams are respectfully saluted and their work is ignored or said to be overstated (DuBois 1946; Williams 1944). It is as if the victory of bourgeois market relations over feudalism, and the "freeing" of workers to sell their labor were largely internal European developments that involved only white men. In fact it was the uniting of class, race, and national exploitation and oppression on a world scale that made the triumph of the European bourgeoisie possible. The reality was all too painfully evident to Toussant L'Ouverture when he unsuccessfully tried to win support for a free Haiti from the revolutionary French bourgeoisie, as C. L. R. James so masterfully relates (1963).

Sometimes it is argued that racial and national oppressions were in theory not essential to a victory of capitalist relations. The argument is fruitless, for historically they *were* joined. True, it was an accident of human physical differentiation that peninsular Europe was inhabited by a people who had lost much of the melanin in their skin, as it was an accident of geography that it was an area with many harbors and waterways, and relatively available coal and iron that made possible primary industrialization once the area had caught up with the ancient urban world. On another planet it might have been different. On ours, however, when it behooved energetic merchants to wring great profits from workers others than those in their own nations, color offered a convenient excuse. The first rationale for slavery was religious, since economic conflicts in Europe had been fought for so long in religious terms. "Heathens" were natural slaves. The rationale did not last long, since heathens could easily convert, at least nominally, when it was in their interest to do so. Color, and the elaboration of the "white man's burden" then became the excuse for conquest, plunder, and enslavement of non-Europeans. Racism did, and still does, serve powerfully to divide the world's workers. It befuddles the scholar as well. Were humanity either wholly "white" or wholly "black," would the early history of exploitation and oppression in the Third World be considered as somehow apart from, or as merely supplementary to, exploitation of Western workers?

I trust I have labored my point sufficiently. At present, Marxist social scientists and revolutionaries in Latin America and Africa are beginning to clarify these issues. Today there are many who recognize that it is

critical to sort out true and false oppositions in joining the struggle of the world's people to bury class society before it buries us all. The point I want to make here is that the same is true when it comes to the oppression of women. And sex oppression goes further back, not just to the rise of capitalist class relations, but to the origins of class itself.

According to the happenstances of disciplinary boundaries, as they became defined in the nineteenth century, the task of analyzing the nature and origin of women's oppression has fallen to us as anthropologists. I cannot say that we have risen to the task. The dominant view today is that women have always been to some degree oppressed — the usual term is "dominated" — by men, because men are stronger, they are responsible for fighting, and it is in their nature to be more aggressive. In the United States, the position has been stated most fully by Tiger and Fox. Fox, in fact, uses the term "man" literally to mean male, rather than generically human. As "man" evolved, he evolved exogamously, writes Fox. "At some point in the evolution of his behavior he began to define social units and to apply rules about the recruitment of people to these units and the allocation of women amongst them" (Fox 1972). Referring to Lévi-Strauss, he elaborates this theory of human evolution with "we" as male, and women as passive objects of exchange:

> For in behavior as in anatomy, the strength of our lineage lay in a relatively generalized structure. It was precisely because we did *not* specialize like our baboon cousins that we had to *contrive* solutions involving the control and exchange of females (Fox 1972:296–297).

Fox's basically biological view is gaining in popularity, containing as it does fashionable allusions to Lévi-Strauss. However, more common among those who discuss sex roles are blunt judgments, empirically phrased, that casually relegate to the waste basket of history the profound questions about women's status that were raised by nineteenth-century writers. "It is a common sociological truth that in all societies authority is held by men, not women," writes Beidelman (1971:43); "At both primitive and advanced levels, men tend regularly to dominate women," states Goldschmidt in a text (1959:164); "Men have always been politically and economically dominant over women," reports Harris in his text (1971:328). Some women join in. Women's work is always "private," while "roles within the public sphere are the province of men," write Hammond and Jablow (n.d.:11). Therefore "women can exert influence outside the family only indirectly through their influence on their kinsmen."

The first problem with such statements is their lack of historical perspective. To generalize from cross-cultural data gathered almost wholly in the twentieth century is to ignore changes that have been taking place for anywhere up to five hundred years as a result of involvement, first

with European mercantilism, then with full-scale colonialism and imperialism. Indeed, there is almost a kind of racism involved, an assumption that the cultures of Third World peoples have virtually stood still until destroyed by the recent mushrooming of urban industrialism. Certainly, one of the most consistent and widely documented changes brought about during the colonial period was a decline in the status of women relative to men. The causes were partly indirect, as the introduction of wage labor for men, and the trade of basic commodities, speeded up processes whereby tribal collectives were breaking up into individual family units, in which women and children were becoming economically dependent on single men. The process was aided by the formal allocation to men of whatever public authority and legal right of ownership was allowed in colonial situations, by missionary teachings and by the persistence of Europeans in dealing with men as the holders of all formal authority (Boserup 1971).

The second problem with statements like the above is largely a theoretical one. The common use of some polar dimension to assess woman's position, and to find that everywhere men are "dominant" and hold authority over women, not only ignores the world's history, but transmutes the totality of tribal decision-making structures (as we try to reconstruct them) into the power terms of our own society. Lewis Henry Morgan had a marvelous phrase for such practice. He used it when talking of the term "instinct," but it is generally apt. Such a term, he wrote, is "a system of philosophy in a definition, and instillation of the supernatural which silences at once all inquiry into the facts" (Morgan 1963:viii). In this instance, women are conveniently allocated to their place, and the whole inquiry into the structure of the primitive collective is stunted. The primitive collective emerges with no structure — no contradictions — of its own; it is merely our society minus, so to speak.

Two examples help clarify these points. On history, take the Balonda, one of the Lunda Bantu peoples of the Congo. In his handbook of African peoples, Murdock writes of political authority among them as "vested in a headman and council of lineage or family heads within the local community," and over these, "district or subtribal chiefs with important ritual functions" (Murdock 1959:286). All are taken for granted as men. Murdock goes on to say that, although the Balonda are patrilineal and patrilocal, their Crow kinship terminology, plus a number of related practices, suggests that they were originally matrilineal and avunculocal like neighboring Bantu peoples (287–288). Murdock is a careful and conscientious scholar, and he or his assistants did, I am sure, scan the some dozen references, English and French, that he lists. Nonetheless, there is no mention of David Livingstone's encounter with the Balonda, when he was traveling through the area in 1857. At that time, women, as well as men, were chiefs. Livingstone's account of a young woman chief in

her twenties, and her self-assurance both in relation to him and to the district chief, her maternal uncle, is so revealing that I am going to give it at some length.

Livingstone entered a Balonda village on the sixth of January and was brought before the chief. He wrote that a man and woman "were sitting on skins, placed in the middle of a circle, thirty paces in diameter, a little raised above the ordinary level of the ground" (Livingstone 1857:273). His men put their arms down, Livingstone continued,

> . . . and I walked up to the center of the circular bench, and saluted him in the usual way, by clapping the hands together in their fashion. He pointed to his wife, as much as to say, the honour belongs to her. I saluted her in the same way, and, a mat having been brought, I squatted down in front of them.
>
> The talker was then called, and I was asked who was my spokesman . . . (1857:274).

This was Nyamoana, sister of Shinte, and mother of Manenko, the young woman chief. The discussion proceeded, Livingstone to his interpreter, the interpreter to Nyamoana's talker, the talker to her husband, her husband to her, the response moving back through the same chain. Livingstone wanted to go on alone to Nyamoana's brother, Shinte, while Nyamoana wanted her people to accompany the missionary. The arrival of Manenko, the young chief, and her husband, ended the argument and much to Livingstone's annoyance, Manenko was to take him to Shinte. "As neither my men nor myself had much inclination to encounter a scolding . . . we made ready the packages," he wrote. However, there was some delay on Manenko's part, so Livingstone seized the opportunity to leave. She intervened,

> . . . seized the luggage, and declared that she would carry it in spite of me. My men succumbed sooner to this petticoat government than I felt inclined to do, and left me no power; and, being unwilling to encounter her tongue, I was moving off to the canoes, when she gave me a kind explanation, and, with her hand on my shoulder, put on a motherly look, saying, "Now, my little man, just do as the rest have done." My feelings of annoyance of course vanished, and I went out to try and get some meat (1857:279).

They walked, too fast for the comfort of Livingstone's men, Manenko without any protection from the cold rain. Livingstone was told that chiefs "must always wear the appearance of robust youth, and bear vicissitudes without wincing." When they arrived at the district chief's, Livingstone gave him an ox, whereupon Manenko angrily asserted it to be hers. Livingstone was "her white man," she declared and she had her men slaughter the ox and give her uncle one leg. Livingstone noted, "Shinte did not seem at all annoyed at the occurrence," thereby corroborating the correctness of Manenko's position (1857:295).

Everywhere in Africa that one scrapes the surface one finds ethnohistorical data on the authority once shared by women but later lost. However, to leave the matter at this, and argue a position of "matriarchy" as a "stage" of social evolution is but the other face of the male dominance argument. Pleasant for a change, to be sure, but not the true story. For what such data reveal is *the dispersed nature of decision-making in preclass societies* — the key to understanding how such societies functioned as "collectives." The second example, from the Montagnais-Naskapi of eastern Canada, makes this point clear. Here we have more than just hints of early Naskapi scattered through various documents. Instead we have rich ethno-historical data in the *Jesuit relations*, particularly in the letters Father Paul le Jeune wrote back to his superiors in France in the 1630's (Thwaites 1906).

Elsewhere I have written of the Naskapi at length, of the fur trade and its impact on the band collective of the emergence of the individual trap line, improperly called the privately-owned hunting territory, and of the changing position of women (Leacock 1954, 1955). The early accounts indicate a matrilocal emphasis in Naskapi society and refer to the considerable "power" held by women. The twentieth-century ethnographies, on the other hand, indicate a loose structure with an emphasis on patrilocality, and infer male "authority" (Leacock 1955). Both early and late, however, considerable flexibility is reported, with no hardened formal structure. Therefore, social practices shifted without the same kind of overt recognition and resistance as, say, that among the Pueblo Indians of the Southwest who have long struggled to maintain their mores. To the ethnographers of the early twentieth century, the Indians, camping temporarily here and there in the woods in the winter, speaking their own language almost exclusively, wearing moccasins of traditional style, sharing game animals within the group, and still remembering much of their pre-metal-tool technology, appeared little changed from pre-Columbian times. In fact, however, the economic basis for the multi-family groups that lived collectively as winter units and that had links with parallel groups which could be activated in times of need, had been fundamentally undercut by the fur trade. The beaver and other furbearers had been transformed from animals that were immediately consumed, the meat eaten, and the fur used, to commodities, goods to be kept, individually "owned" until exchanged for goods upon which the Indians had come increasingly to depend. The process whereby "goods" were transformed into "commodities," although completed early in the old centers of trade, was still incomplete in outlying areas well into the twentieth century, so that the outlines of the change could be reconstructed from my fieldwork, with the seventeenth-century Jesuit records serving as the base line.

In the 1630's individuals within Naskapi society were autonomous; people made decisions about activities for which they were responsible.

Group decisions were arrived at through feeling for consensus. The essential and direct interdependence of the group as a whole both necessitated this autonomy and made it possible as a viable system — *total interdependence was inseparable from real autonomy.* The *Relations* document the ethic of group solidarity as bound up with individual autonomy that together characterize the Naskapi. The emphasis was on generosity, on cooperation, on patience and good humor, but also on never forcing one's will on others. This ethic was enforced through ridicule and teasing, often bawdy, behind which lay the threat of great anger at injustice, and the deep fear of starvation, that might ultimately force individual hunters to abandon the group in order that someone might survive. The psychological expression of this fear was a cannibal monster — the *witigo*, and a cannabalistic psychosis.

The *Relations* also document the ethic that the Jesuits taught their converts, an ethic admirably suited to the breaking up of the band collective into families as economic units. The ethic was clearly stated: people should obey their chiefs (who should be formally elected); women should obey their husbands; a husband should take but one wife and insist on exclusive sexual rights over her; divorce should no longer be possible; and children should obey their parents. "Alas," le Jeune complained, "if someone could stop the wanderings of the Savages, and give authority to one of them to rule the others, we could see them converted and civilized in a short time" (Thwaites 1906:XII, 169). His teachings were not widely accepted, however, and his lecturing that men should restrict their wives' sexual activity so that they could be sure their children were their own, was met with a retort, "Thou hast no sense. You French people love only your own children; but we love all the children of our tribe" (1906:VI, 255). His exhortations against polygamy were similarly unpopular. "Since I have been preaching among them that a man should have only one wife," he wrote, "I have not been well received by the women; for, since they are more numerous than the men, if a man can only marry one of them, the others will have to suffer" (1906:XII, 165). The children were le Jeune's final problem. "All the Savage tribes of these quarters . . . cannot chastise a child, nor see one chastised," he wrote; "How much trouble this will give us in carrying out our plans of teaching the young" (1906:V, 221). He proposed a solution:

> The reason why I would not like to take the children of one locality in that locality itself, but rather in some other place, is because these Barbarians cannot bear to have their children punished, nor even scolded, not being able to refuse anything to a crying child. They carry this to such an extent that upon the slightest pretext they would take them away from us, before they were educated (1906:VI, 153–155).

The "sagamores," or "headmen," were spokesmen, or intermediaries for

the group; they held no formal power. "They have reproached me a hundred times because we fear our Captains, while they laugh at and make sport of theirs," bemoaned le Jeune (1906:XI, 243). They "cannot endure in the least those who seem desirous of assuming superiority over the others; they place all virtue in a certain gentleness or apathy" (1906:XVI, 165). Shamans were often people of considerable personal influence. Women as well as men became shamans at that time; this has ceased to be the case. In one incident recounted in the *Relations*, a woman shaman took over from a man who had not succeeded in reaching the gods. She began to shake the house so and "to sing and cry so loudly, that she caused the devil to come," whereupon she called upon the people to rally in war against the Iroquois. When a Jesuit Father took her to task, "she drew a knife, and threatened to kill him" (1906:IX, 113–117).

Personally, I have been tempted to think of women as "natural" peacemakers; it is a role they play in many societies. Among the Naskapi, however, women joined in the protracted torture of Iroquois prisoners with even more fury than the men, in bitter anger at the loss of kinsmen dear to them. (The Iroquis were initially the aggressors.) As for the notion of women "obeying" their husbands, the *Relations* are full of arguments over this issue, with women running away from zealous male converts who were threatening to punish them for disobedience.

Reconstructed bits and pieces from the last five hundred years of North American Indian history suggest that parallel developments took place quite widely among previously egalitarian peoples. As trade, and in some cases wage labor, undercut the collective economy, chiefs and other men of influence began to play roles beyond that of spokesmen, often as entrepreneurial go-betweens in commercial matters, or as leaders of resistance, and the masculine "authority" of ethnographic accounts took shape (although doubtless often exaggerated, as largely male ethnographers recorded the views and experiences of largely male informants). Under colonial conditions, the "public" and "private" sphere became divided, as had not been the case when the "household" *was* the "community," and the "public" sphere became invested with a semblance of the female power it represents in state-organized society. However, to consider latter-day chiefs as having held ultimate authority in earlier tribal terms, is to distort the structure of societies in which relations with outside groups were not yet combined with an internal economic basis for the exercise of individual power.

At first blush, the fact that in some instances chiefly authority was undercut by the colonial usurpation of power would seem to contradict the above. However, while the great reaches of the north and northeast, down into the western plains and plateaus, constituted a huge area in which collective life was as yet unchallenged, in the southern and coastal areas of what became the United States and Canada, native American

societies were developing internal cleavages prior to Columbus. I have been using the term "tribal" in an inappropriately undifferentiated manner in order to make my general point; in fact, however, the lumping of non-Western and non-Oriental peoples into a single category of "primitive," "preliterate," "tribal," etc., that is then contrasted with "civilization" has been a source of confusions which are not yet entirely cleared up. Classes, with their contradictory properties of freeing human ability and creativity through specialization of labor, while at the same time alienating the producers from control over the products of their labor, were of course developed or developing in many parts of the so-called primitive world prior to European colonialism. What is of moment in the present argument, however, is that in both egalitarian societies where chiefly authority was a matter of purely personal influence, and in stratified societies where it was based on some form of economic control over a significant part of the society's production — or whatever variation on the two principles or the combination of them in fact existed in the historic moment of any given society at the time of Columbus — at the heart of subsequent changes in group structure was the delineation or strengthening of the family as an economic unit and its separation from essential dependence on band or kin ties.

The authority structure of egalitarian societies where all individuals were equally dependent on a collective larger than the nuclear family, was one of wide dispersal of decision making among mature and elder women and men, who essentially made decisions — either singly, in small groups, or collectively — about those activities which it was their socially defined responsibility to carry out. Taken together, these constituted the "public" life of the group. These were the decisions about the production and distribution of goods; about the maintenance, building, and moving of the camp or village; about learning and practicing various specialties and crafts, and becoming curers, artists, priests, dancers, story tellers, etc.; about the settlement of internal disputes and enforcement of group norms; about feasts connected with birth, adolescence, death, and other rites of passage; about marriage; about ceremonial life, and about the extra-legal or anti-social manipulation of supernatural power; about the declaration of war and the making of peace. Even a casual consideration of any nonstratified society one knows reveals that in the precolonial context, in so far as the culture can be reconstructed; to speak simply of men as "dominant" over women distorts the varied processes by which decisions in all the above areas were made.[1]

[1] Although one must check for distortions in the ethnography of a group. For example, take men "exchanging" women in Australia. Older men may spend a great deal of time talking about such exchange (as to Hart and Pilling), but older women are also involved; sons are married off by elders as well; and the young people do have ways of refusing if they are dead set against the marriage. Furthermore, marriage is not that big a deal anyway, since

In order to grasp the nature of the social collective from which class divisions arose, it is essential to grasp the implications of decision making as widely dispersed, with no one holding power over another by social fiat (only by personal influence). All of this is nothing new, of course, since Engels outlined the entire proposition in *Origin* (1972). It is the more surprising, therefore, that so little additional study has been made of the processes whereby the emergence of commodity production and a merchant class were interrelated with the breakdown of the tribal collective into individual units that were economically responsible, privately, for rearing a new generation.

The male bias to which I have already alluded is part of the reason why *Origin* has not been taken more seriously. However, a good part also lies in the brevity and design of the book itself. *Origin* sets up a paradigm, a model of tribal society as contrasted with class society. Virtually all of the non-European and Oriental world are placed in the first category, and Greece, Rome, and early Germany are used as examples of the transition from collective kin-based to class-organized society. Therefore the book leaves in a very unsatisfactory state the colonial peoples who were in various stages of transition to class and state organization when their autonomous development was interrupted. Morgan's overcorrection of the Aztecs, so to speak, in his concern to clarify distinctions between Aztec rule and more entrenched state organization, was accepted by Engels, so *Origin* has little applicability *directly* to New World urban societies. And the fact that Morgan, Marx, and Engels all shared an ethnocentric ignorance of Africa has limited the applicability of *Origin* to the analysis of African kingdoms. Furthermore, Engels' lack of any reference to the "Oriental" society that so interested Marx, and that subsumed, in a general way, the patriarchal societies of the East and of the classical Mediterranean that existed for thousands of years, is a further shortcoming. Finally, perhaps, Engels' work has suffered precisely because it has been so accepted, for despite its shortcomings, it is still a masterful and profound theoretical synthesis. At a time when Marx is being taken off his pedestal as a god who ordained the future, and is being seen increasingly as a man of great brilliance who armed people's hope for a better life with theoretical tools for organizing their fight for such a life, the fact that Engels' work has to such an extent been reduced to dogma has probably worked to its disadvantage. And, again, first and last, it has been relegated to the status of a "woman's book," peripheral to the scholarly domain. I cannot help but digress with an anecdote. Having sent a copy of the new edition of *Origin* with my introduction to a

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divorce is easy, and sexual exclusiveness a foreign concept. To talk of "power" by men over women in such instances, as if it were the power of a Victorian father to consign his daughter for life to personal servitude to a man she dislikes is ethnocentric distortion.

colleague, whom I knew was interested in many of the questions I discussed, I asked for his reaction. He thanked me for sending the book, and assured me that he had given it to his wife who was very much engrossed in it.

At present, then, we have something of a paradox. We are becoming acquainted with some of Marx's thinking about early social forms that he did not bring to publication in *Capital* or elsewhere — parts of the *Grundrisse* that predated it, and now the beautifully edited *Ethnological notebooks* that followed it. Yet these are being considered strangely apart from *Origin*, as if they somehow superseded it, as if *Origin* did not represent in the main the product of both Marx's and Engels' thinking. After all, the questions the notebooks raise — the full significance of commodity production and its early development in relation to money and then coinage, the relation between slave and free labor, between internal and external markets, between town and countryside in ancient society — were all discussed in *Origin*, along with their relation to the family as the fundamental economic unit in class society.

A recent exception is Mariarosa Dalla Costa's "Women and the subversion of the community" (n.d.), which elaborates on the economic significance of women's labor within the private confines of the family for the production of a new generation of workers. Dalla Costa also discusses distinctions between the patriarchal family and the capitalist family, as the center of production shifted from the patriarchal home to the factory. Again, however, in the contemporary academic setting in which Marxist anthropologists largely function, this is considered a "women's article."

In closing, I want to suggest the kinds of research questions that would begin to redress the imbalance I have been discussing:

1. Is the strongly institutionalized sex antagonism that is found among Melanesian and Latin American tropical forest horticulturists tied in with an early phase in the development of specialization and trade and the breaking up of the primitive collective? What are common features in both geographical areas? Are there parallels elsewhere, somewhat obscured by the happenstances of who writes about what and where? Is the formalized hostility related to incipient competitiveness over a surplus of food, at times allowed to rot in keeping with egalitarian pressures, yet beginning to operate as an independent force through trade? Is there a concomitant shift from matrilineal to patrilineal kinship? How widely was social structure affected by slaving (in Latin America the Yanamamö apparently came out on top of neighboring peoples in this respect) or by recruitment of plantation labor (so common in Melanesia)?

2. What about the comparative study of cloth as a major form of goods that could be easily transformed into a commodity? In fact, cloth suggests itself as a perfect commodity, not only in Europe (and not only because of the first hundred pages of *Capital*), but because it is useful everywhere,

and in many places essential, for everyone, while at the same time it is capable of generating a widespread demand as a luxury item that must constantly be replaced. It is readily storable, and not overly heavy for transportation, and it is very time-consuming to produce by hand. Cloth is indicated as important in the emergence of commodity production and in the delineating of the extended family household as an economic unit. Note such items as Marx's references to wives and daughters producing cloth in the (patriarchal) Oriental household; references to traded cloth like those of de Lacerda, the eighteenth-century Portuguese emissary to Angola and Zambia (Burton 1969:79); the fact that England destroyed the Indian cloth industry when she took over that country; the discussion by John Murra on the role of cloth in strengthening the economic base of the Inca state (1962); the probable importance of cloth manufacture in the development of classes in Mesopotamia (informally, Robert Adams indicated to me that material on women as weaver-workers, and on their declining status, are available for attempting to reconstruct the early relations of class and family in this area); the importance of cloth as a trade item among the Maya (June Nash informed me that the more independent women in late Maya society were those who were weavers as well as other specialists — potters, healers, midwives, and tradeswomen).

3. What about commodity production seen from a different vantage point, the market? The study of internal markets and external trade as they relate to the emergence of classes and the state has clearly suffered from the failure to tie in the emergence of the family as an economic unit. In West Africa, for example, data on women as internal marketers and men as external traders have too often been the focus for argument over women's status relative to men, rather than the focus for reconstruction of class and state formation. A wealth of questions awaits research in this region, where for more than five hundred years taxes from trade laid the basis for royal centers that maintained themselves along with standing armies and elaborate entourages. The historical rise and fall of these centers, the extent of urban development involved, and the nature of economic ties between these and surrounding agricultural village areas, are questions clearly related to the delineation of at least upper-class families as entrepreneurial economic units, and in many parts of West Africa kin groups ceased functioning as collectives long before colonial times. West Africa offers data on a further topic, the resistance of women to the process of their exclusion from newly-developing forms of public authority.[2]

4. A problem of increasing interest today is the structure of those precapitalist class societies that have been loosely dubbed "Oriental." In the congeries of questions to do with relations between city and country-

[2] For example, among the Igbo of Nigeria.

side, nature of classes, and extent of trade, the patriarchal extended family cannot be ignored as a central institution, with its upper-class and lower-class variations.

5. I could continue indefinitely, but let me end with ideology. The series of fascinating questions about concepts of omniscience and omnipotence, and absolute good and evil, that accompany the rise of classical theocracies, cannot ignore that what becomes a primary evil, sex, is represented by female temptation, not male. Are we going to leave this where Freud left it? When does the shift take place from "female" as symbolic of positive fertility to "female" as temptation to evil? Aztec theology was moving toward absolutes; are there hints of the latter aspect? When does it appear in Mesopotamia? It was very early that the law codified that women could *no longer* take "two husbands" or they would be stoned.[3] An interesting early version of the Protestant ethic was represented by women who lived together as ascetics — as nuns, but were independent business women who produced cloth.

To sum up, as these instances illustrate, and as serious consideration of the point dictates, to relegate the analysis of changing family forms to a secondary status leaves social interpretation not only incomplete, but distorted. Furthermore, to leave out women as women, leaves out people, hence much of the dialectic that is involved in individual decision making as the stuff of social process. Such omission is conducive to mechanical determinism in the analysis of both preclass and class society. And finally, the passing over as subsidiary of subjects concerning women, not only distorts understanding, but becomes another stone in the wall of masculine resistance that moves women to reject Marxism as not relevant to their problems. As a result, we make no positive contribution toward the woman's movement. Marx indicated that the oppression of women in a society was the measure of its general oppression. One can add, the strength of women's involvement in a movement dedicated to opposing a social order is a measure of the movement's strength — or weakness.

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[3] From a 24th century B.C. plaque: "The women of former days used to take two husbands, (but) the women of today (if they attempted this) were stoned with stones (upon which was inscribed their evil) intent" (Kramer 1963:322).

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Problems of Primitive Society in Soviet Ethnology

YU. V. BROMLEY

According to the Marxist concept of primitive society it is labor that provides the demarcation line between man and animal and is the first essential condition of human life. "Labour begins with the making of tools" (Engels 1972a:176). Primitive society, which originates with the separation of mankind from the animal world, displays a primitive collectivism in production and consumption which is due to the underdeveloped state of productive forces. According to Engels, production

> . . . was essentially collective and, likewise, consumption took place by the direct distribution of the products within larger or smaller communistic communities. This production in common was carried on within the narrowest limits but concomitantly the producers were masters of their process of production and of their product (Engels 1972b:170–171).

Primitive collectivism, and the primitive communal relations which are based on it, are destroyed only when progress in the productive forces brings about the social division of labor with all its consequences, namely, exchange, property inequalities, exploitation of man by man, and, in the long run, classes occupying antagonistic positions in production and distribution. The primitive communal constitution "was burst asunder by division of labor and by its result, the division of society into classes" (Engels 1972b:165). In varying natural and concrete historical conditions this process could be represented by varying spatial and temporal forms, but its general trend, i.e. from preclass to class society, is universal for the whole of mankind. Such is the essence of the Marxist concept of primitive society.[1]

From Yu. V. Bromley and A. I. Pershitz, 1972, "F. Engels i problemi pervobitnoi istorii," in *Problemi etnografii i antropologii v svete nauchnogo naslediya F. Engelsa.* Moscow: Nauka.

[1] Such an understanding of this concept is maintained in a number of investigations by Soviet scholars (among the most recent examples are Pershitz et al. 1968:4–5 and Kelly and Kovalson 1969:119–123).

It should be emphasized that the founders of Marxism themselves clearly distinguished it from specific conclusions of various kinds about primitive societies. Such conclusions reflected a certain level of accumulation and generalization of actual data; they could hardly remain unchanged with the development of science.[2]

At present such a distinction is all the more important since the materialistic concept of primitive society is still an object of violent criticism accompanied by attempts to oppose this concept with facts unknown at the time of Marx and Engels and, based on these facts, with new philosophic and historical constructions. Such criticism commonly attributes to Marxist theory specific quotations from Engels on particular questions or even obsolete theses of Morgan, Bachofen, and others. Therefore, the Soviet science of primitive society from its very origin faced a problem of generalization from and theoretical interpretation of newly obtained ethnographic materials and, what is of special importance, of archaeological and paleoanthropological data which were almost nonexistent in the second half of the last century. The bulk of the new information revealed by Soviet scholars and colleagues from other countries have made it possible not only to substantiate but to develop all the methodologically important points of the Marxist theory of primitive society.[3] At the same time, this material has generated a number of new scientific problems which have been particularly actively developed and discussed in recent decades.[4]

First of all is the complex of questions concerning the mutual dependence of the gens, family, and community — their functions and historical correlations. Since an understanding of the gens and community is dependent upon that of the primitive forms of the family, let us begin with the latter.

Originally, Morgan marked five stages of the family evolving from sexual promiscuity, viz. the consanguine, punaluan, pairing, patriarchal, and monogamous families, the first two being based on group marriage. This scheme was adopted by Engels with certain reservations. In the first edition of *The origin of the family, private property and the state*, Engels following Morgan, considered the consanguine family to be a necessary stage in the development of family relations, but in the fourth edition, after the works of Fison and Howitt had become available, he allowed that the dual-phratric marriage of the Australians could have developed directly from promiscuity (Engels 1972b:44–45). At the same time he strongly opposed the idea of the punaluan family as a necessary stage in

[2] Thus, Engels indicated the imminence of a subsequent revision of Morgan's theory of periodization of primitive society, the hypothetical character of the theory of promiscuity, and the disputability of such problems as the mechanism of the origin of the gens (1972b:23, 32, 41–42).

[3] For more details, see Tokarev 1946; Tolstov 1947; Pershitz 1966; Semenov 1959; Semenov 1964b.

[4] For more details, see Yu. V. Bromley and A. I. Pershitz 1972:7–35.

the development of the family and marriage (Engels 1972b:43). Time has demonstrated Engels' view to be correct.

Shortly after Engels' death, data were obtained which suggested a rather late origin of the Malayan kinship system, the basis for reconstruction of the consanguine family. True, in the last few years it has been shown that with the short average length of life of Paleolithic people (according to the Vallois estimate most women died under thirty) the period of living together of adjoining generations was rather short, and this could have led to the practical impossibility and then to the forbidding of individual marriages (see Yu. I. Semenov 1963). But the consanguine family presupposes exclusion from the marriage circle not only of mothers, but of fathers as well, although this is not supported by paleodemographic estimates and ethnographic data (Zolotarev 1940). As to the punaluan family, it has turned out to be a pure invention of missionaries — Morgan's informants (Pershitz 1967).

Proceeding from the above, many Soviet scholars take as the first historically witnessed form of social control of sex relations the exogamous dual-gens group marriage. The group character of marital relations is reconstructed, first on the basis of the peculiarities of the Turano-Gannovanian kinship systems, second by analysis of relics of freedom of sexual intercourse evidenced by history and ethnography among many backward tribes. But how and where did group marriage exist? As unilocal settlements of group mates are very rarely found, the hypothesis of dyslocal marriage has become widely disseminated; its supporters find substantiation for this hypothesis in certain customs, survivals, and folk love themes, which admit, however, other interpretations as well (Kosven 1932; Krichevsky 1934; Tolstov 1935; Yu. I. Semenov 1964a).

According to other investigators, group marriage has not been sufficiently validated. Starting with contemporary marriage institutions in the great majority of backward tribes these investigators trace the history of family and marriage from the pairing family which is regarded as the smallest economic unit in the wider economic group (Butinov 1968a; Kabo 1968). This point of view seems to be supported at present by some archaeologists indicating that already in paleolithic times there existed small single hearth dwellings (Grigor'ev 1968; Bibikov 1969).

This divergence of views on the initial forms of the family is directly connected with the divergence on the essence and functions of the gens. If one attempts to summarize the points of view of different authors, which is, of course, a difficult task carrying in its wake certain simplifications, it is safe to say that in the treatment of this problem there are two major approaches — the "gentile" and the "communal." Adherents of the former suggest that the basic structural unit of the developed primitive society, both social and economic, was the gens, and from this it is inferred that at this stage of development productive and consanguine

relations coincided. But as the necessary determining feature of the gens is its exogamy, a question poses itself: in what way could the whole gens function as an economic unit? The most consistent supporter of the gens theory, Yu. I. Semenov firmly connects the answer to this question with the hypothesis of dyslocal marriage: under dyslocal conditions the gens was a productive unit, and when, with the advent of unilocality, this coincidence was violated, a gradual decline of the gens organization began (Semenov 1965). This theory seems to be rather logical, but owing to its hypothetical basis, viz. the concept of the initial dyslocal character of the marital dwelling, it cannot be demonstrated satisfactorily.

Adherents of the second approach believe this conception of the gens to be false. Their thesis basically boils down to the fact that the principle economic cell of developed primitive societies was the community formed both by a group of relatives and offspring of other communities connected with them by marriage ties and joint households (Butinov 1968a, b, c; Kabo 1968; Bakhta 1968; Maretin 1968); from this it is inferred that productive and kinship relations could not coincide. As to the gens, many authors believe that it simply constituted an organization for the control of family and marriage relations (Bakhta et al. 1964; Danilova 1968; Kabo 1968) or that it was only one form of such control, valid largely for the Neolithic period, and even then, not among all peoples. This concept seems to provide the opportunity to differentiate between and better understand all of the basic structures of primitive society. But it has a weak point as well: when considering gens relations as noneconomic, it remains unclear why among many backward tribes property in the means of production manifests itself not as that of the community, but as that of the gens. (About the Australians, see Sharp 1934:19ff; Falkenberg 1962:21ff; Hiatt 1962:285. About the Papuans and Melanesians, see Brown 1877:149; Pheil 1899:27; Brown 1910:28; Kaberry 1941:257; Hogbin and Wedgwood 1953:250; Read 1955:251; Reay 1959:6; Pospisil 1960:189)

The fact of gens land property was so striking that it could not fail to be noticed by supporters of the "communal" theory who, for want of an alternative explanation, endeavor to separate the "nominal" "external" and other kinds of property of the gens from the "actual" property of the community. Thus, V. R. Kabo (1968:244–245) writes about the Australians:

> True, the patrilineal totemic gens in many cases [even where it is not localized] is considered to be the owner of the communal land [Arunta, tribes in deserts of the West and in the region of Port Keats, partly Yir-Yorant]. However, it is the community that uses land; not the gens. Although wives who came from other communities, according to certain authors, nominally gain no right to land in the husband's community, in fact together with men, they take part in the exploitation of natural resources on this land.

N. A. Butinov (1968b:172) reports of the Papuans:

> In Mendy, Kaiaka, Ipily, Kuman and some other tribes each gens is associated only with one locality. The Papuans believe that the ancestor came out of the land and since then land belongs to the gens. In fact, as mentioned above, all land is owned by the gens community.

Butinov also states (1968c:142) that with the origin of the gens community

> . . . those members of the community who moved to other communities, up to the end of their lives retain their former gens affiliation and their rights to the communal territory . . .

However, it is obvious that such an explanation just substitutes one guess for another.

What, nevertheless, was the basic economic cell of the developed primitive society? Evidently it was not the gens as a whole, for certain members, leaving for other communities through marriage, lost some of their real economic bonds with their relatives; and it was not the gens community as a whole because certain residents, having come from other communities, retained, to a degree, their previous ties. Most likely a localized part of the gens formed the economic backbone of such a cell and provided the main bulk of the membership of the gens community (see Bromley and Pershitz 1972:19–24).

Remaining at issue for representatives of the above points of view in the study of primitive society is a question relating to the form of the initial gens. Whereas supporters of the first point of view continue to defend the priority of the matrilineal gens organization, adherents of the second point of view posit a parallel origin of the matri- and patri-gens. To support this, they refer to the existence of patrilineal or bilateral descent traditions among backward tribes such as the Australians or Bushmen who are Mesolithic in their technical equipment. These authors believe that the origin of patrilineal or bilateral descent in these cases is related, first, to an earlier form than previously acknowledged of the pairing family that was capable of producing an idea of social if not of physiological paternity; and, second, to the outstanding role of men in communities of wandering hunters and gatherers. When treating this question one should first take into account the fact that the ethnographic material indicates a lack of any rigid connection between the level of development of production and the form of gens organization. Therefore, one should differentiate between two distinct problems: the reasons for the development in some tribes of the early paternal gens and the nature of the original form of the gens.

Indeed, some underdeveloped tribes — for instance many Australian tribes, the Aetha, Semang, Senoi, and Bushmen, some of the tribes on

Tierra del Fuego and Kubu, the Akita and others — demonstrate such features as the outstanding role of men in their economic and social life, the marked separation of the pairing family, and the existence of paternal or bilateral affiliation. All this appears to be related to particular natural and sociohistorical conditions conducive to a certain atomization of society. Specifically, the early transition of the Australians to the paternal gens could be caused by singularities of the local fauna which made for the development of individual hunting for small game; in other cases migration, the influence of more developed neighboring communities, and so on, could be important factors.

Such an explanation of the comparatively earlier transition to patrilineality in many tribes of wandering hunters and gatherers has already been suggested in Soviet ethnological literature (Tolstov 1961; Pershitz et al. 1965). Moreover, it is reasonable to suppose that a certain atomization of society and the early patrilineal descent related to it were peculiar not only to some particular ethnographic groups which persisted on the outskirts of the *oikumene* but also to those classical Mesolithic tribes which, due to the vanishing of big game, had to go over to more or less individualized hunting by wandering.

However, the early origin of the patrilineal gens has nothing to do with its origin being concurrent with the matrilineal gens. On this question, modern ethnographic material has to our mind in no way shaken Engels' thesis of the historical priority of the matri-clan organization. More than that, new arguments can be cited today, in addition to this thesis' substantiation where Engels pointed to the uncertainty of paternity under group marriage. Thus Tylor noticed that ethnography knows of many signs of a transition from the matrilineal to the patrilineal gens, and few, if any, point to the reverse transition. Similarly, the overwhelming majority of patriarchial tribes show traces of the matri-clan and the converse was almost never registered (Tylor 1889). There is also the gradual discovery in many new patri-gens communities of survivals of matrilineal organization (Averkieva 1968; Yu. I. Semenov 1970), warranting the belief that in the future development of ethnography such survivals will be found in tribes where they have not been observed thus far. Further, recent data from primatology concerning the rudiments of matrilineal affiliation even in bands of apes (Reynolds 1968), suggest that the feelings of matrilineal kinship were substantially ahead of those of patrilineal.

Another cluster of problems being studied by Soviet historians of primitive societies bears on the breakdown of primitive society and the formation of classes and the state.

According to Engels the basic economic premise for the transformation of primitive to class society is the transition to a productive economy, the latter being the necessary condition for regularly obtaining surplus products. Archaeological discoveries in recent decades, particularly in

the Near East and Central Asia, as well as in America and other regions of the *oikumene*, provide a brilliant demonstration of Engels' thesis of the qualitative difference between a hunters/gatherers and a productive economy, maintained by him in generalizing Morgan's periodization (Engels 1972b:28–29). These discoveries indicated the establishment of agriculture and cattle breeding in the most advanced regions of the globe as early as Neolithic times (Child 1952, 1956; Steward 1955; Novikov 1959; Tolstov 1961; Frankfort 1951; Braidwood 1960; Masson 1964; Bakhta 1968; Vasil'ev 1966; S. A. Semenov 1968). At the same time it was emphasized that the productive economy did not initially involve a breakdown of primitive society (Semenov 1963:5), whereas on the basis of highly developed and specialized hunting and fishing economy there sometimes did emerge fairly pronounced forms of exploitation (Averkieva 1961, 1970).

This contradiction, however, is only apparent. Indeed the hunters/gatherers economy and the productive economy are defined by different potentialities. Agriculture and cattle breeding were the high road to the progressive economic development of primitive men. Specialized hunting and fishing were only peripheral; they were feasible where natural conditions hindered transition to a productive economy and predetermined a slower pace of development. But the differences in possibilities between a hunters/gatherers and a productive economy, and the social consequences of these differences, did not have their effect immediately; therefore, the border between them should not be made absolute by, for instance, characterizing early Neolithic agricultural and hunting societies as incomparable in principle (Bakhta and Formozov 1961; Bakhta 1968:274).

As to the mechanism of class formation, in recent years lively discussion has centered on questions of historical correlation between property differentiation and social ranking, including the earliest forms of exploitation, viz. slavery, various types of intercommunal dependence, and tribute. In the matter of the genesis of state power, attention continues to center mostly on military democracy, which was considered by Engels to be one of the most important political institutions during the period of class formation. New and generalized data indicate a wide spread of military democracy in this period but nevertheless suggest that as a stage concept it fails to cover the whole of the period of transition to class society, being replaced in the process by military hierarchical and oligarchic structures (Khazanov 1972).

Let us dwell in more detail on a set of problems pertaining to classification, evolution and correlation of the basic socioeconomic structures during the breakdown of primitive society. Soviet historians and ethnologists have conducted extensive studies of the rural community which was regarded by Marx and Engels as a type transitional between common property and private, and between uniform distribution and nonuniform (Engels

1947:220–221). A number of works show the universal character of the neighboring community in the period of breakdown of primitive society, the neighboring community being characteristic not only of agriculturists, but of cattle breeders, hunters, and fishers as well (Dolgikh and Levin 1951; Potapov 1954; Averkieva 1961; Fainberg 1964). Such studies also indicate its earlier preclass form which is referred to by different authors as the primitive neighboring community (Pershitz 1960), heterogeneous community (Butinov 1968a; 1968b), or neighboring-gens community (Maretin 1968). Newly available material gives us a better insight into another important social result of the period of breakdown of primitive society — the household community. Earlier M. O. Kosven marked two principal stages in its evolution — democratic and despotic — each being considered a stage in development of the patriarchal family (Kosven 1963); now it is possible to single out one more universal-historical form: the fraternal family community, representing the most archaic prepatriarchal stages in the development of the democratic extended family (Bromley 1972). Discovered simultaneously was the so-called patronymic community, i.e. a group of near relatives, the localized nucleus of which was at the same time a nucleus of closely related extended and small families (Kosven 1963; Yu. I. Semenov 1968b).

Soviet ethnologists are also interested in the problem of historical and functional correlation between the various structures characteristic of the period of breakdown of primitive society, viz. the primitive neighboring community, household community, later gens, and patronymic groups.

There is a view that the household community originated earlier than the neighboring community and constituted the intermediate step between the neighboring community and the gens community (see Alaev n.d; Abramzon 1957:34; Kislyakov 1969:35; Tumarkin 1970:94). This view has been developed by M. M. Kovalevsky in his "Essay on the origin and development of the family and property"[5] and was quoted by Engels in *The origin of the family, private property and the state*. However, Engels treated it with caution, pointing out that it presents "new difficulties and new problems that need solution" (1972b:139). In contrast to Kovalevsky, Engels acknowledged the possibility of such a development of the neighboring community in which "the gentile constitution was imperceptibly transformed into a territorial constitution, and thus became capable of being fitted into the state" (Engels 1972b:148).

According to another opinion, it was not the household community but the combination within one village of a number of unrelated patronymic groups which having broken down, gave rise to the neighboring community (Kosven 1963:121). (This point of view approaches allusions

[5] It is of interest that in one of his later works (1905) Kovalevsky rejected his earlier conclusion and stated that the village community was the successor of the gentile one.

by Kovalevsky to the household community.) What the two viewpoints have in common is their reduction of any neighboring community to only those of its late forms which are already mainly peculiar to class society, those in which gens relations are fully supplanted by neighborly bonds. Meanwhile, the primitive neighboring community (heterogeneous, neighborly-gens) distinguished by some Soviet authors is characterized by interwoven kinship and neighborly bonds in the presence of extended family and patronymic groups. We believe, therefore, that historically the extended family, patronymic community, late gens, and primitive neighboring community are basically simultaneous occurrences, and that the intermediate stage in the transition from the gens community to the neighboring community of class society was not the extended family but the primitive neighboring (heterogeneous, neighboring-gens) community.

Of greater complexity is the question as to which of the above structures was the main economic unit during the period of breakdown of primitive society. In recent years the interpretation of the appropriate materials by Soviet ethnologists has been noticeably enlivened; in particular, this is reflected in a discussion started in 1967 by the journal *Sovetskaya Etnografiya* [Soviet Ethnography].[6] The discussion is still in progress, but even now the general conclusion is justified; as the late gens was mainly a superstructural phenomenon, special economic significance should be attached to the primitive neighboring community and extended family, in which on various taxonomic levels the private property elements of subsequent class societies matured.

In the light of new ethnographical and archaeological materials a demand has arisen for refining (as was predicted by Engels) the periodization of the history of primitive society proposed by L. G. Morgan. In the course of recent discussions of the post-war period several variants of a new periodization have been suggested (Tolstov 1946; Kosven 1952; Pershitz 1960; N. A. Butinov 1960; Butinov and Semenov 1965; Averkieva 1967). Although the discussion is not yet completed, its main outcome is apparent. It is commonly acknowledged that this periodization should be based primarily on sociological, not on cultural and historical factors.

We have outlined just a few of the problems of primitive society being studied by Soviet scholars. However, even this brief review demonstrates main trends in their systematization and theoretical interpretation of new factual data. The problem is complex enough: it will be recalled that Engels pointed out how full of contradictions and how much in need of critical scrutiny and screening ethnographic data are; to a large extent the same is true for anthropological and archaelolgical data as well. Moreover, many questions about the early history of primitive society

[6] See Kryukov 1967 and discussion of this article in subsequent issues of the journal.

cannot as yet be treated unambiguously due to the scarcity and fragmentary character of available sources. This carries in its wake differing conclusions drawn from some factual data, disagreements in views on particular aspects of the problems considered above, and heated discussions in the course of which extreme and seemingly incompatible views are advanced. But all this should not hide the main point — that such relatively specific discussions are carried on from a single scientific perspective — Marxism.

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* The following abbreviations have been used in the References:
PIDO = Problemi istorii dokapitalisticheskih obshchestv
PIPO = Problemi istorii pervobytnogo obshchestva
GAIMK = Gosudarstvennoi Akademii istorii material'noi kultury

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The Anthropology of Work

GENE WELTFISH

Today the concept of work, so long accepted as inevitable and indispensable to society has become a matter of strong controversy, particularly for the job-holder on many levels in the factory, the office, and even the lower echelons of the executive suite. For many, especially those in top management, who make the plans, one of the major props of society is being kicked out from under them. Sometimes desperate measures are being taken to effect a compromise. But the situation intensifies. The problem is so all-inclusive that it becomes necessary to look at it as a question that involves our total society rather than any individual aspect of it.

SURVIVAL AND THE PRIMATE SOCIAL DIMENSION

The anthropologist is well aware that from the very long view, the evolution of our society did not begin with the human race. Instead, our newer findings combining paleontology and primatology show us that not only are there physical continuities in the whole primate order, but social continuities also. This social dimension is one of the prime necessities for biological survival. The social primate in his nonhuman state — the lemur, the monkey, and the ape — is physically highly vulnerable. He is small and slow compared with the elephant, the lion and the tiger. The primate is a relatively undifferentiated creature in an evolutionary sense: the soft underbody is readily exposed, the limbs moving in all directions; he has neither claws, fangs, extra bulk, nor extra swiftness. In his defense the primate has two important things: his binocular stereoscopic vision, and his opportunity to make alternative decisions instead of being ruled simply by instinct. The accidents of development have placed the eyes in

two bony sockets that trend them forward so that some part of their visual range overlaps, giving the world as they see it a three-dimensional quality. Primates alone, except for birds, have color vision. Through sight they can apprehend happenings at great distances with a speed far beyond that received through hearing or a sense of smell. (The speed of light is 186,000 miles a second; sound, far slower, travels only 800 miles an hour at sea level.) Sherwood Washburn reports that a monkey is welcomed among a group of assorted animals in East Africa for his capacity to see danger quickly and sound the warning signal.

The primate infant, born helpless, takes an exceptionally long time to develop the most elementary skills, many of which require some teaching on the part of the adult society. From the lemur up in the evolutionary scale, we find this to be a social function, the maternal instinct as a mechanical drive being absent. The basic instincts seem to diminish until the level of the apes; the latter can neither swim nor engage spontaneously in sexual intercourse when reared apart from their community. Monkeys and lemurs evidently perform both these activities spontaneously. The primates are all alike in that they do not instinctively "mother" their infants during the long period of helpless immaturity, and it is the social group that furnishes protection and learning for its immature members.[1]

Alison Jolly (1966a) who has made an intensive field study of the lemur in Madagascar, points out that while we anxiously seek evidence of tool using or devising as an index of primate intelligence, the highly developed social skills of these same primates are little valued. Moreover, the supposition that sexual attraction is the major factor keeping these societies together is contradicted, in the case of the primitive lemur which has a very limited breeding season (probably only two weeks) and a

[1] Dr. Harry Harlow is still working on a series of experiments with monkeys that began with the intent to find out if there was anything to the unscientific notion of "mother love." He raised several hundred infant monkeys with "surrogate mothers" formed of wire, sometimes bare and sometimes covered with terry cloth and supplied with a bottle "breast." The monkeys survived but the result was slightly horrifying. The females would not breed. When forcibly impregnated, they would sometimes kill their infants. Sometimes they would instinctively feed the children and then hang by their tails from the top of the cage and bat at the infant as if it were an inanimate object. He concluded one interim report in *Nature Magazine* by saying that he and his co-workers speculated on the construction of a mechanical "rejecting mother," but they found they had inadvertently produced 200 *real* ones.

. . . daily on the sidewalk, in the park, or the supermarket . . . mothers unashamedly wallop their children, kick them, slap them, and verbally chastise them in ways that make one fear for what they must do in private. All around us there is evidence that many parents dislike their children. (Note commenting on the book *Are parents bad for children: Why the Modern American family is in danger*, by Graham B. Blaine, Jr., M.D. *New York Post*, 21 July, 1973:27).

Our society, unwilling to take responsibility for its children, clings to the myth of the maternal instinct in the hope that women will be unable to avoid assuming the whole task because of an inner "drive," a particularly prevalent trend in a male-dominated society like ours.

highly developed social life throughout the year, with little evidence that mating is a factor:

> Two strong cohesive forces in many primate troops are attraction to infants and the "friendly behavior" of contact, grooming and play. . . . Newborn infants of both kinds of lemur attracted much attention. Propithecus' friendly behavior was four times as frequent after the babies were born, for every member of the troop crowded near, attempting to groom the young. The mother, during the first day or two, sat apart from the others, but later simply boxed her great jumping thighs round her infant. The troop then fell to grooming her instead, or one would distract her by grooming while others tried to reach the baby. Again, the males were as doting as the females. The first time I saw a mother relinquish her baby for 5 minutes, she hopped off to feed while her 2-week old infant clung to the belly of a battle-scarred male (1966a:502).

But there is one major function that the nonhuman primate does not perform socially, i.e. the sharing of food. Here there is a sharp line of division between the social life of the human and that of the nonhuman primate which is absolutely crucial to the whole process of evolution. We will discuss its implications further on.

While the nonhuman primates do not share food, even with their infants, there is a very important learning process. In the nonhuman primate the infant is simply nursed; nothing else is given him by his mother or anyone else; he must acquire his own pattern of food collecting by imitation. At first he picks up the leavings that his mother drops and sometimes tries to reach some of the food as she chews it in her mouth (Kawamura 1963:84). A clear index of the overriding importance of social learning is demonstrated in Jane Van Lawick-Goodall's study of wild chimpanzees. She reports 90 different kinds of vegetable foods eaten by the chimpanzees she observed, consisting of fifty types of fruit and over thirty types of leaf and leaf bud, also blossoms, seeds, barks, and piths, resin licked from tree trunks, and wads of wood fiber. Among insects she reports three species of ants, two of termites, one of caterpillars, a variety of grubs, larvae of different beetles, wasps, gallflies, etc. and bee larvae on raiding bees' nests. Birds' eggs and fledgings are also eaten and a group of forty individuals may catch over twenty different animals during one year. Small quantities of soil including salt are also eaten. Acquiring a diet of this broad range surely requires a considerable learning process (Van Lawick-Goodall 1972:281–282).

A graphic description of social learning about food is given of macaque monkeys in Japan. In 1954 candies were left for them and the babies first took up the habit. But only through close relations between groups was the habit transmitted from group to group. In 1953 a young female, three years old, developed the practice of washing sweet potatoes before eating them. It was then transmitted to her playmates and to her mother after which, during three years, it spread to other groups (Imanishi 1963:75).

It is common for food experimentation to begin with the immature and be passed upward in the age and status hierarchy by way of its mother. But the reverse trend may occur, in another case wheat eating originated with an adult male who was predominant; it was passed on to the "chief female," then taken up by her family and subsequently by other families (Kawamura 1963:85). These monkeys eat 119 species of plants, insects, and eggs. Each group has its own food preferences (Imanishi 1963:71). From these and other examples it is clear that there is a social learning community.

The function of protection is assumed by the entire community, the adult males taking a very active part. For example, when a trap was set for the monkeys, the predominant male held them back from approaching it and attacked the individuals that persisted in trying to reach it. Some infants trying to get the bait were also held back by the leaders. An infant approaching a pool was pulled back by its mother (Kawamura 1963:87).

Of particular interest is the involvement of adult males in infant and child nurture. When new babies are to be born, the one-year old infants are protected by the dominant males and others. Five out of six leaders, nine out of ten subleaders and peripheral males showed this behavior within one troop. The adult male hugs the infant, takes it on his loins or walks with it; when sitting he will groom it, and on critical occasions he takes it under his protection. Sexual preferences of the male for the female babies is obviously not involved; of the sixty-two protected individuals, twenty-eight were males and thirty-four females. This mode of taking full paternal charge is to be distinguished from paternal care, which is universal — adult males protecting newborn babies and walking with half-year-old babies on their bosoms during the breeding season (Itani 1963:92–93).

THE HUMAN PRIMATE AND HIS WORK

As regards the full transition to the human condition, we have archaeological evidence of Australopithecus excavated by the Leakeys in East Africa; this shows the earliest identifiable locus of a human encampment. Evidence points to the fact that foods included meat scavenged from the leavings of carnivores and a variety of smaller animals. We can only speculate that the transition from the forest to the open land was brought about either through population pressure, desiccation, or both.

The structure of the skeleton shows that Australopithecus was a bipedal walker, the two hind legs having taken over the entire function of locomotion, leaving the arms and hands free to do other things (the monkey being a quadruped and the ape only an occasional bipedal

traveler which uses its arms and hands as well as its feet for locomotion most of the time). Australopithecus, living on the open plain rather than in the forest, could no longer find his food "to hand" but had to scrounge over a wide area. From the evidence of the encampment, he returned to a definite place with the food, and this suggests that it was shared. Unlike the other primates, food had become a major focus of social life for Australopithecus. A different quality was added to the social dimension, for not only was interaction directed toward helping others, but also toward producing and sharing material, that is, food. Worked stone tools were also found in the vicinity of the encampment.

The enormous proliferation of the division of labor that began at this time became our opportunity and our nemesis. In the open plains environment the young child could not find its own food as did other primates in the forest and had to be provided for. The wide-ranging hunter could not be burdened with the child which had to be kept within a more limited range, thus some part of the group had to take over this "baby-sitting" function. Presumably and hypothetically, some protection was added to the child-care responsibility of the female, while the male took over some of the group food-getting responsibilities. Whether or not the agreed-on date of Australopithecus is about two million years, the basic human pattern both in its continuity with the other primates and in its uniqueness, had been established by then. The division of labor in a social group as an old primate survival pattern, included division of labor by sex and age, with protection and education of the young its main function. Its special human variant involving a semipermanent home base and the sharing of food in the social group as well as the manufacture of tools, now included materials within the social context.

The universal principle of the division of labor by age and sex, in the strictest sense, limits the possibility of choosing the work we want to do, although the concept of the social group itself has long had built into it a variety of individual tasks that together result in joint survival. Today age and sex are no longer accepted limitations on the choice of social roles. Women are no longer willing to accept the breeding pair or its analogues as the ultimate subgrouping. They would separate mating, childbearing, and childrearing as individual and separate functions. At the upper end of the life cycle, older people are not ready to make way for the descending generations in their choice of a life style.

If work is defined as the expenditure of life energy, and advanced technology is rapidly "automating" most of the survival tasks, then personal choice of occupation should no longer be limited by the varying amounts of physical energy that differentiation by sex and age might determine. The emergence of the wish for individual choice of role in the social group endeavor indicates that acceptance of differential roles during the long period of human evolution has been on sufferance and in

terms of recognized necessity for group survival. However, the anthropological study of surviving tribal groups in which such an acceptance of role prevails, shows us a good deal more flexibility for individual temperament, than in our society even within the limited range of possibilities that group size and technological development allow. The extreme concentration of political and economic power in our society rather than survival needs has determined this restriction. And despite all efforts by our power groups to compel ideological acceptance of this order of things as a primary survival principle, ultimately it cannot be accepted by the individuals underneath.

The Israeli kibbutz has had a long battle with the woman problem. The group organization of services was developed to free the women from the older household routine. However, the elevation of physical labor on the soil and a status down-grading of all services, including teachers, has placed the women in a depressed social position which they are unwilling to accept. The elderly have also been left stranded by this scheme. The introduction of factories in the kibbutzim and off-community careers, have begun to alleviate this situation. The exaggerated insistence upon everything being done together, left the individual with no privacy whatever as no tribe in the world has ever done; this has created a demand among the women for more private forms of life. The interpretation that they are thus returning to the "biological family" is fictitious. Such striving for privacy and intimacy is not the same thing as the patriarchal family (Spiro 1970).

Most tribal groups with which the anthropologist has dealt accepted differentiated work roles, shared tasks spontaneously, and cooperated willingly. A mode of social reciprocity prevailed in which, more or less by "casting your work and product upon the social waters," you obtained a reasonable share. This seemingly freewheeling arrangement is not without its checks and balances. As Malinowski pointed out among the Trobriand Islanders

. . . in all the manifold activities of an economic order, the social behavior of the natives is based on a well-assessed give-and-take; always mentally ticked off and in the long run balanced. There is no wholesale discharge of duties or acceptance of privileges; no "communistic" disregard of tally and earmark. The free and easy way in which all transactions are done, the good manners which pervade all and cover any hitches or maladjustments, make it difficult for the superficial observer to see the keen self-interest and watchful reckoning which runs right through (1967:25–27).

Instructions given to an Omaha Indian youth carry the same message:

If one does not make arrows [and go hunting to obtain skins], he will borrow moccasins, leggings, and robes, and be disliked by persons from whom he borrows.

If you are not industrious, when a herd of buffalo is slaughtered, you may come across a young man whom you may consider insignificant (i.e. of no position in the

tribe) but who has killed a buffalo by his own energy, you will look longingly at the best portions of the meat, but he will give them to another who is known to be thrifty and generous and you will go away disappointed.

An industrious man wears leggings of well-dressed deerskin; his robe is of the finest dressed buffalo skin and he wears earrings . . . if a man is not industrious and energetic, he will not be able to entertain other people. A lazy man will be envious when he sees men of meaner birth invited to feasts, because of their thrift and their ability to entertain other people. If you are lazy, nobody will have pleasure in speaking to you. . . . Even when only two or three are gathered to a feast, the energetic and industrious man is invited. People in speaking of him say, "He is pleasant to talk with, he is easy to approach." Such a man has many to mourn his death and is long remembered. . . . Such are some of the things that used to be said by the old to the young men (Herskovits 1965:117–118).

The appearance of power of any kind is strongly resented. A Kwakiutl Indian fisherman of Vancouver Island very graphically states the case even though the function of chief has a valid place in group survival. A strong hierarchy of social roles exists. The Kwakiutl are organized into clans which collectively control lands and fishing grounds. The chief of the clan is the manager of these properties. He acts for the group in war and in dealings with other clans. As a mark of status and clan power, a chief will periodically give an elaborate feast to notables of another clan, culminating in a vast distribution of gifts consisting of manufactured goods, art objects, and preserved foods. The collection of these gifts from among allied clansmen is a complex year-long endeavor. In terms of clan identity, these feasts and the war expeditions led by the chief for booty and revenue are public functions. The ordinary clansmen, however, are not wholly convinced that the rate of taxation demanded of them is equitable. But more than that, force on the part of the chief is not condoned as the following, rather long quotation illustrates.

. . . about the early Indians. Indeed, they work for the head chiefs of the numaym [clan]. When the hunter goes out hunting, and he gets many seals, the hunter takes one of the seals and gives the seals as a present to the head chief of his numaym; for he cannot give one-half of them [to the chief] — even if the hunter has obtained many seals — and give a feast with the other half from what he has given to the chief. As the seal meat does not keep and the meat is not preserved, such a large amount of fresh meat can only be used by a chief at a feast, for the ordinary clansman is not in a social position to give a feast. Therefore the hunter takes one seal for food for his children and his wife. The hunter who does so is treated well by the chief. If a stingy hunter gives half of his seals to the chief because he prefers the price offered by another of another numaym, then the chief of the hunter's numaym tried to kill the hunter, and often the chief strikes the hunter so that he dies, if the chief is a bad man; and there the chiefs of the various numaym own hunters.

Mountain goat hunters, when they get ten goats by hunting, give five goats to the chief of the numaym, and the hunter cuts up the goat meat for his numaym when he wishes to do so. If he wishes to dry it, he does that way. When the chief is a good man, he does not take the goat away from the hunter by force, and the good

chief never thinks that one-half given to him by the hunter is not enough. If the chief is bad, he wishes more than half of the goats, then the bad chief will kill the goat hunter, but generally the goat hunter kills the bad chief, if he overdoes what he says to the hunter (Herkovits 1965:436–437).

A similar description in relation to dried salmon and the foods that the women gather then follows. The Kwakiutl hunter who cannot enjoy the full fruits of his labor must inhibit his anger which is expressed in violent reactions and constantly smoldering resentment. In our society, where the division of labor has become so extensive, the inhibition of our inclinations and status is taken by many of the ruling hierarchy as a fact of the order of nature. In our circumstances, the inhibition is analogous and the force of resentment is similar (Herskovits 1965:436–437).

Among the Polynesian Tikopia of the South Pacific, one does not hire out to work for someone else:

Contracting to work for another person for a reward specified in advance is not a Tikopia custom. When one person works for another, their association is so governed by canons of etiquette than it assumes the form of partnership in a joint enterprise, and the ultimate reward for the labor takes on the external form of a gift. Examples of this are found in such undertakings as the repair of canoes and the extraction of sago. The matter is well summarized in these terms: a man "is not given a job because he contributes to the productive fund; he makes the contribution because he has accepted the obligations of the job" (Herskovits 1965:119–120).

Diametrically opposed to any such niceties, is our current all-pervading arrangement of the boss and the superboss with a vast pyramid of subordination, reaching down from executive to worker. Today there is an almost universal reaction against this plan of life:

. . . young blue-collar workers, who have grown up in an environment in which equality is called for in all institutions, are demanding the same rights and expressing the same values as the university graduates . . . there is a growing professionalism among many young white-collar workers. They now have loyalty to their peer group or to their task or discipline, where once they had loyalty to their work organization. . . . From our reading of what youth wants, it appears that under present policies, employers may not be able to motivate young workers at all. Instead, employers must create conditions in which the worker can motivate himself.

From biographies of artists, athletes and successful business men, one finds invariably that these people set goals for *themselves*. The most rewarding race is probably one that one runs against oneself. Young people seem to realize this. They talk less positively than do their elders about competition with others. But they do talk about self-actualization and other "private" values. Yankelovich found that 40% of students — an increasing percentage — do not believe that "competition encourages excellence," and 80% would welcome more emphasis in the society on self-expression (HEW 1971:49–50).

At Lordstown, Ohio, General Motors has one of the most highly automated plants in the automobile industry; sophisticated machinery, including robot welders, permits the line to build 100 cars an hour — almost twice as many as other factories can produce. An automobile moves past the worker every thirty-six seconds.

> Last year defects began to appear in the Vegas — slit upholstery, severed ignition wires, loose bolts. Management charged that workers were deliberately slowing down and not doing the necessary work; they fired hundreds of employees. The workers, angered, replied that they were required to do too much too fast, and that the layoffs were punitive and unfair. There followed a 22-day strike, which cost millions in lost production and wages and left most of the critical issues unsettled (Kahn 1973:39).

In September 1966, the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act took effect, requiring manufacturers to notify owners of suspected safety defects in their cars by certified mail. Some 36.8 million cars have been recalled since then. In 1972, 12 million cars were recalled by their manufacturers, exceeding the previous record of 9.4 million set in 1971 (*New York Times*, 19 April, 1973). One kind of defect in a specially ordered police car was reported in the *New York Post* (30 May, 1973:17): 1,230 Ford and Mercury police cars were recalled to correct an improper routing in the front fuel hose. The firm said the hose might rub against other parts, leading to possible fuel leaks and the danger of fire under the hood.

Clearly, the plan of the efficiency engineer, Frederick Winslow Taylor (1967), for assembly line production by idiot workers, which was magnificently implemented by Henry Ford's automobile factory, has become redundant.

In Appendix 1 I present a selection of newspaper articles that appeared between 1971 and 1973, most of which are from newspapers of only one area, but were widely distributed throughout the United States. They reveal a quiet revolution in which worker anger, worker discontent, and management worry are plainly registered. A considerable number of conferences were also held at that time, some of which are noted in the articles quoted.

These phenomena are, of course, not confined to the United States. They are of major concern in all industrial countries and the most positive reactions have been in Sweden and the other Scandinavian countries, in West Germany, England, Italy, Japan, and the Soviet Union. After an eight- to ten-year struggle in Norway and Sweden and a more recent one in West Germany, a concept of "industrial democracy" or "economic democracy" has emerged, whereby workers have gained full membership on what would be the equivalent of our corporate boards of directors, such a requirement being built into the legal system as a citizen's right. In

a Swedish survey of teenagers' work plans, a 12-year-old boy said: "A bad job is where others make all the decisions and you have to do what they say" (Jenkins 1973b). In a Harris Poll reported in the *New York Post* (22 February, 1973:14) it emerged that:

> Approximately 6 in 10 persons in America who work for a living say they would be "very willing to work harder if they had more to say about the kind of work they do and how they do it, or if they could work more independently.

The assembly line and the whole prepacked "organizational chart" in which each worker is squeezed into the predesigned job, have outlived their usefulness. We can no longer continue purchasing a worker's time instead of his talents and capacities. In 1893 Emile Durkheim pointed up the distinction between spontaneous specialization and "forced division of labor" (1964:377):

> Doubtless we are not from birth predestined to some special position; but we do have tastes and aptitudes that limit our choice. If no care is taken of them, if they are ceaselessly disturbed by our daily occupations, we shall suffer and seek a way of putting an end to our suffering. But there is no other way out than to change the established order and to set up a new one. For the division of labor to produce solidarity, it is not sufficient then, that each have his task. It is still necessary that this task be fitting to him.

Durkheim goes on to observe that if the institutions of classes and castes give rise to anxiety and pain instead of producing solidarity

> . . . it is because the distribution of social functions on which it rests, does not respond, or rather no longer responds, to the distribution of natural talents. . . . [It is] not simply the absence of all express violence, but also everything that can even indirectly shackle the free unfolding of the social force that each carries in himself (Durkheim 1964:377).

THE ONGOING EVOLUTION OF SOCIETY

What causes the most anxiety to those who are considering the problem of our society at this time is that our whole social structure appears to be "caving in" — work, the home, the church, the school, the government — all our mores are being challenged. The youth have been the first to sense the all-embracing malaise. The dynamic interconnectedness of the social whole was lucidly anticipated by Engels in *The origin of the family, private property and the state* (1970) and in this concept lies our hope for effectively treating the problem.

Engels' work combines special insights from two levels of experience. One of these was his observation of English textile mills where he saw

young children tied to the machines in which their limbs sometimes caught and driven to total collapse through long hours of work and brutal working conditions. His observations were set forth in *The condition of the working class in England* (1958). Using philosophical and historical sources, Engels also made a detailed study of the classics and the development of early European culture. His studies and reflections led him to the conclusion that early European cultures retained much that was a survival of their tribal past. But of particular interest to the anthropologist was the incorporation into his work of the material of Lewis Henry Morgan on the Iroquois. Engels felt that this provided valuable insights into our own tribal past.

The apparent dispersal of all norms (Durkheim's *anomie*) is causing the greatest dismay to the present generation, particularly to the younger people who feel a vague distress at having no definite projections as they have been taught to expect (despite their opposition to them). What is most difficult for the people who are ostensibly practicing it to realize, is that when a custom or life style has been conceived as a norm it has already lost its dynamism and has already died. The pressure to continue an economy based on increasing masses of consumer goods with built-in obsolescence and accumulation of an expected control of future wealth, cannot endure. A recent radio report proudly announced that this year the Ford Motor Company had produced one million more cars than last year. Our concept of ourselves as the be-all and end-all of the evolutionary process has lulled us into insensibility toward the facts of ecology — the materials and forces among which we live, the ever-changing evolutionary scene of which we are a part. The Iroquois Indians, as they lived when Lewis Henry Morgan worked with them, provide a marked contrast to this condition. For the Iroquois, man was very much an organic element in the total natural order (see Morgan 1962). However, it was not so much ecology that concerned Engels, but the integral character of society. The absence of a police force or a standing army was a clear indication that the political structure of the Iroquois was not external to the people since it did not have to be maintained by main force. In his preface to the first edition of *The origin of the family, private property and the state*, Engels expounded the materialistic conception of social history in the following terms.

There is an essential balance between the production of the immediate essentials of life, the production of articles of food, clothing, dwellings, and the tools necessary to that production, and the production of human beings themselves. "The social organization under which people of a particular historical epoch and a particular country live is determined by both kinds of production — or, stated in functional terms — by the stage of labor on the one hand, and of the family on the other."

The cumulative historical process moves forward in terms of the rela-

tions among these factors. Kinship groupings furnish the organizational principle of peoples with simpler labor organization and limited amounts of products. The organizing principle of kinship leads to a greater efficiency of labor, and work is divided into various categories, with specialists carrying on the work in each. The specialists then become more skilled and produce more, and with the intensification of skills a further division of labor results. As the divisions increase, in order to serve the necessary functions, people have to exchange their special products with each other to completely fulfill their needs. The shoemaker must necessarily exchange his shoes for clothes, pots, bricks, beds, etc.; and each in turn must exchange his product for the shoemaker's. In order to satisfy the organic needs of the society as a whole, the special products, the raw materials, the processes of exchange must be coordinated. The process of coordination becomes a more and more extensive function on its own account as specialties proliferate, eventually evolving into a managerial pyramid such as we have today.

The intensification of skills under specialization results in an increase of wealth which leads to more extensive trade. Trade beyond the productive group must lead to administrative coordination and negotiations between different kinship and tribal groups, which is eventually concretized and unified in the state. The manager and the administrator no longer have any sense of kinship with the people. They take on an abstract identity. However, for the people whose lives have become increasingly fragmented, the existence of these external forces has become indispensable, resulting in greater and greater loss of control by the actual producers. The present movement that we see among the workers, is clearly intended to restore the processes of production to their control.

Paralleling this development is the production of population. Beyond the inchoate social stage of the nonhuman primate is the first human "home base," or encampment, which must necessarily include more than a breeding pair and their offspring. The wide-ranging male hunter cannot protect the female and offspring, and the food-gathering female cannot nurture infants and children while scrounging the countryside. It therefore becomes essential to pool their efforts so that the women share their responsibilities and organize their activities together in order to cover the various functions in and out of camp. As in the case of the nonhuman primate, group organization is indispensable to human survival.

The more highly developed and larger kinship groupings are based on an ideological construct developed in terms of mythology. Such an imaginative construct of the natural order includes an explanation of its evolutionary process, man being included. Viewing all things organic and inorganic as having living reality, man places himself within the total context as more or less closely related to certain aspects of it. Identification is with animals, plants, or other natural features, and groups of

people develop around particular identifications that the group shares. Preoccupation with biological descent is not the main organizational principle among tribal peoples. The sense of group loyalty that develops around mythical figures is characterized by production for mutual group benefit, and this is further and further subordinated as the productive process becomes increasingly effective.

Our present position is clearly a redundant condition in which all these relationships are breaking down: the kin unit, management bureaucracy, and nationalism, along with mythology, which, among other lines of development, became religion. The development and projection of this last factor is what is missing from Engels' study. Neither scientific, logical, nor philosophical systems in themselves can carry forward this essential aspect of human needs. These emotional needs must eventually find expression in the field of aesthetics.

A MODERN EXPERIMENT IN COLLECTIVE PRODUCTION AND COLLECTIVE LIVING

There are important lessons to be learned on this question from the development of the Israeli kibbutz, a modern experiment in collective production and collective living.[2] Aside from its origins and its immediate condition, the account of a specific kibbutz by Melford E. Spiro (1970) is highly instructive. The kibbutz in question is discussed under a fictitious name, Kiryat Yedidim. (The bulk of the material was obtained between February and December 1951 and updated to 1970 by additional field work.)

This kibbutz was founded on Marxist-socialist principles and the main tenor of its social outlook included:

> The moral value of labor as a primary ideal, particularly on the land in the sense of a calling or dedication. Physical labor had the highest moral value over any other kind of work.
>
> Property used and produced by the entire community rightfully belongs to the entire community; hence the economy rests on the public ownership of property. Land is owned by the entire nation and rented to the kibbutz on a 99 year lease. All other property is owned by the members of the kibbutz. Ideally, the individual owns nothing with the exception of small personal gifts.
>
> An implicit concept of asceticism.
>
> Social and economic equality.
>
> The moral value of the group — the primacy of group experience over individual. The interests of the individual must be subordinate to the interests of the group (Spiro 1970:11–29).

[2] For an historical critique that elaborates the points I mention, see Diamond (1957) and for related perspectives see other contributors to special issue of *Social Problems* (1957: vol. 5).

By 1970, certain principles had emerged:

Because of the downgrading of the value of services in favor of physical labor, trouble continues to arise with the women whose main assignments were service jobs. This heavy priority on physical labor also isolated the ageing population.

The development of industries in the kibbutzim, and members who follow professional careers outside, have begun to alleviate these difficulties (Spiro 1970).

According to Sol Stern:

Industries have begun to develop on most of the kibbutzim. Industry is fast replacing agriculture as the main source of income for the kibbutz and it has accounted for a phenomenal rise in consumption levels.

While still accounting for 30% of the country's agricultural production, 232 kibbutz factories account for 7% of the manufacturing output. Sales are increasing at an average of 23% a year and the number of factory workers is rising annually by 7%. In the coming five years, more than $250 million will be invested in existing and new industrial plants, most of the money coming from Government development loans. Kibbutz industrialization is a fast-moving trend.

However, as stated in an article in the magazine of the kibbutz movement, "reality has forced us to a new highly specialized and industrialized economic order, yet no one has developed new ideological models to guide us" (Stern 1973:37).

The problem of ideology for the kibbutz has now become extremely serious. By 1970, at Kiryat Yedidim allegiance to the Soviet ideology had become extremely clouded. Certain of the original principles remained:

With numbers of members developing professional careers off the kibbutz, and industry coming in, the principle of sharing work and property survives: . . . communal ownership of the means of production continued to be an accepted way of life, a viable one, and an honored one. Conversations on the future of the kibbutz rarely reflect any disbelief in communal ownership (Spiro 1970:262).

Another interesting principle that appears to have developed spontaneously is the reluctance to marry a member of your own kibbutz and the practice of seeking a mate from an outside group. This principle is very common among tribal clans. No one has satisfactorily explained its occurrence, repeatedly and apparently independently. It is obviously not based on any principle of biological kinship.

One of the original principles that has met with a demand for modification is the requirement of constant communality — constant common interaction and communication. There is an almost universal need for individual privacy, some solitude, some one-to-one relationships with a mate or a child to allow some genuine intimacy. While this may give the appearance of a return to the breeding pair or "biological family" social unit, in fact it is not, as we see from the persistence of the principles of

communal ownership and common work: "They are willing to share property and skills, but many of them resent the sharing of experiences . . ." Spiro frequently heard complaints about the noise and crowdedness of kibbutz communal institutions, the absence of privacy, and the constant exposure to the public eye (1970:247). The appearance of insistent demands for greater privacy and intimacy is not surprising as there are no people in the world that do not make some provision for both these needs. The need to keep your own counsel at times is everywhere understood.

The problems in kibbutz life obviously do not arise from purely materialistic causes. There is a constant need for guiding principles that will hold the group loyalty of the kibbutz members. As is clear in tribal groupings, these principles must rest on emotional bases and take sufficiently imaginative and creative forms to be effective:

> There are a small number of religious kibbutzim in Israel with their own federation. They adhere to all the rituals of Orthodox Judaism and pattern their lives after Talmudic law (Spiro 1970:148, footnote).

> It is no accident that the members of Kiryat Yedidim speak of the religious kibbutzim with great admiration, despite their unqualified disagreement with their religious values (Spiro 1970:196, footnote).

> Some chaverim . . . are not content with the way in which Kiryat Yedidim observes its Jewish festivals and feel that more thought should be given to this area of their social life (Spiro 1970:147).

> Kiryat Yedidim is antireligious in the conventional meaning of "religion". Its Zionist motivations are national and social, not religious, and it has consistently attempted to remove any "religious" aspects of Judaism from its culture. Hence though it celebrates many of the traditional festivities and holidays of Judaism, including the Sabbath, it has reinterpreted their meaning in accordance with its secular outlook (Spiro 1970:140).

> Should they be celebrated at all, or should they be ignored? And if they are to be celebrated, what form should this observance take? This is an area in which Kiryat Yedidim, after more than thirty years, is still unsure of itself (Spiro 1970:142).

THE QUESTION AT ISSUE: WHAT ARE THE MOTIVE FORCES THAT INDUCE PEOPLE TO PRODUCE WHAT IS NEEDED FOR THE ONGOING SOCIETY?

The paycheck is a recompense for assembly-line fragmentation, speed-up, and bureaucratic dominance is no longer primary for the worker. Instead he struggles to preserve his human dignity in the face of tasks that are so fractionalized that he has no view of the task itself and no discretion whatever in its performance. The mechanizer and the efficiency engineer

in their preoccupation with their own maneuvers have forgotten that the human body is the primary instrument of manufacture. Automation and mechanism are special versions of the exercise of human energy in which the person develops relatively automatic physical habits which he applies for operative efficiency when it is called for. But, unlike the fixity of the mechanism of the machine, the human body continues to exercise judgment each time it applies the habit mechanism. The transaction between the human body and the materials is judged by the individual in each instance, and sometimes the habit pattern is imperceptibly varied. To lose sight of this function of the human operator, no matter how highly automated and remote the mechanism may make it seem, is to bring mechanism to its present redundant stage. There is no "quality control" that can compensate for a mechanism that attempts to exclude this contact. And if indeed someone were to compound the trouble by thinking "the computer will do it" — it can't. The proposition that "the brain is merely a meat machine," put forward by a computer expert, is untenable.

Joseph Weizenbaum professor of computer science at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology furnishes a lucid explanation of why that proposition is untenable (1972). However complex the program built into a computer, it is nevertheless a description as conceived by the programmer.

> The failure to make distinctions between descriptions, even those that "work," and theories accounts in large part for the fact that those who refuse to accept the view of man as machine have been put on the defensive. . . . What is wrong I think is that we have permitted technological metaphors, what Mumford calls "Myth of the Machine," and technique itself to so thoroughly pervade our thought processes that we have finally abdicated to technology the very duty to formulate questions. Thus sensible men correctly perceive that large data banks and enormous networks of computers threaten man. But they leave it to technology to formulate the corresponding question. Where the simple man might ask: "Do we need these things?" technology asks "what electronic wizardry will make them safe?" Where the simple man will ask "is it good?" technology asks, "will it work?" Thus science, even wisdom, becomes what technology and most of all computers can handle (Weizenbaum 1972:610).

However, in this machine age, the human producer speaks up and we are compelled to move from *industrial* production to *social* production. The question now arises as to how individual social energies can be released and directed so that a society providing personal fulfillment comes into being? The "power and punishment pattern" can no longer be allowed to prevail. The quiet revolution of our current era is exemplified in a report from Detroit (*New York Times*, 17 July, 1973:15):

> AUTO TALKS BEGIN, WITH PLANT CONDITIONS KEY ISSUE
> Negotiators from the United Automobile Workers and the auto industry settled themselves into the plush air-conditioned offices of the General Motors Corpora-

tion here today to listen to the often frustrated discordant voices of the 725,000 workers who man the assembly lines.

The daily problems that workers face in the plant are emerging this year more than in previous bargaining. Not only General Motors but also Ford, Chrysler and American Motors will wrestle with the U.A.W. on problems related to working conditions. A committeeman of Local 674 who has been dealing with the worker complaints for 17 years at General Motors plant in Norwood, Ohio, remarked that there was little talk among the workers about a big pay rise in spite of recent increases in food costs, but they want a change in the atmosphere they work in, a decent temperature, make sure the place is clean and a guy treated like a human being. "That means a lot to a guy." They want overtime work to be voluntary instead of on demand and the right to walk off the job when there is a health safety problem and no discipline measures until they have had a chance to state their case. Union officials have not been too anxious to handle these problems, but as Leonard F. Woodcock, the president of the United Auto Workers observed, ". . . this year the union would have to make a big impact in the noneconomic area." Richard Minton, the president of U.A.W. local 674 warned that "these issues had become lost during the past national bargaining, causing more pressure on local leaders to deal with them."

One of the complaints, for example, erupted in a wildcat strike at the General Motors plant in Norwood, Ohio. The workers have to wear airtight hooded helmets that reach down to their waists to protect them from the lead dust in their metal-enclosed work area. Air is fed into the hood through a hose and the air is cooled during the summer. Months before the strike, the men had told the foreman of the malfunction — 95-degree heat and humid air which the men bore for 10 days while the company tried unsuccessfully to repair the air system. Also the air supply diminished. On June 12, they refused to work, disrupting the operation for 2 days. They were then barred from the plant from one to two weeks. As Eugene Bethel Carter, one of the men who work in the hoods phrased it, when he filed a grievance over being docked for two weeks pay, "It's like being guilty without being proven . . . I don't think I was wrong not working. A man's health and safety means a lot."

The real conflict and the crux of the issue was stated when George B. Morris, vice-president for industrial relations, who headed the General Motors bargaining team, spelled out why management was concerned, in a speech given in 1971. He said that General Motors' highest priority in bargaining was "the retention of management's freedom and the responsibility to make decisions in areas vital to the continued success of the business. In the current talks the union leadership is under considerable pressure from its members and local leaders to win modification of some of these freedoms." Clearly, the goal must be to give the worker discretion over the tasks he performs and how he performs them. In a society in which, for more than 6,000 years the pattern of dominance has been built and elaborated, what manner of social life can we devise that will give the individual the discretion to expend his social energies in terms of his own volition?

SOCIAL VOLUNTARISM IN TRIBAL SETTINGS: SOCIAL COHESION

Any social ideology is based on the concept we hold of the nature of human nature. Currently, the most commonly repeated stereotype is that "you can't change human nature" implying that the current image is inevitable. The whole science of comparative culture stands in opposition to such narrow limitations on the human personality and its potentialities. The evolving environment and the evolving human being offer us no opportunity to simplify the in-process flux by a fixed and limited image. We are going to have to develop techniques of fluid learning and fluid operations, which means moving easily from one context to another. Anthropological studies of cultures offer a valuable tool in this task.

One of the important modifications of the present assembly line organization has been the establishment of work teams, each with its tasks to accomplish. The workteam is a common phenomenon in tribal life. Among food-gathering peoples it is essential to survival. Among technologically more advanced peoples its social form is more complex, particularly among tribes which cultivate crops. Lineages viewed as permanent work teams are known to the tribe as more or less industrious and enjoy a reputation accordingly.[3]

The Iroquois Longhouse as a Subsistence Workshop

The household of the Iroquois Indians of New York State was organized and maintained around a group of related women who raised crops, maintained the household, preserved and stored the food, made the clothing, and cared for the children. The food was distributed from the common store under the tutelage of a leading woman who performed the household ritual; the affairs of the household were governed by a council in which all the women of childbearing age participated and had equal voice. This council was represented in the councils at all the higher administrative levels — in the village, tribe, and intertribal league, in which the men were the main members. A man found a home either in the household of the woman whom he married or at a permanent home base, the household of his sisters and his mother. The Iroquois household was the longhouse, a long corridor with an arched roof. Along each side was a series of booths. There was a series of fireplaces down the length, with a smokehole above each; each fireplace served two booths, one on each

[3] According to Herskovits (1965:97), a report of eight families from Tzintzuntzan, Mexico, was published by George Foster illustrating this point. There is also a chart analyzing the work of five Pueblo Indian men of Arizona which reveals one of them as apparently "the laziest man in Oraibi" village.

side of it. Each booth was the assigned place of a kinswoman with or without children, and a husband from another clan who married in. The family that inhabited such a booth was referred to as a "fireside family." The presence of the man rested upon the maintenance of the marriage, that of the woman and her children upon the fact that it was her permanent home as a member of her clan, along with her mother, her sisters, her brothers, her mother's sisters, and her mother's brothers. The man could leave, or the woman request him to do so, whereupon he would return to the household of his mother or sisters until he might marry again. The primary relationship of the individual was with the clan, not with the marriage.

The Pawnee Roundhouse as a Subsistence Workshop

About a thousand miles west of the Iroquois across the Mississippi and the Missouri in Nebraska, the Pawnee Indians maintained composite households, based on the clan kinship of women with agriculture as the mainstay of their subsistence. Crops of corn, beans, and squash, similar to those of the Iroquois, were cultivated, and the matrilineal clan was the basis of their kin relationship. Historically, the Iroquois and the Pawnee are believed to have had a common past because their highly distinctive language structures are clearly related. Like the Iroquois, the Pawnee depended on councils to come to important decisions. Within the Pawnee household, however, there was a major difference from the Iroquois. There were no household councils and food was not pooled. All work, including the distribution of food, was done through a mode of informal consensus and we might well characterize their way of work as deriving directly from a spontaneous social impulse rather than a controlled division of labor by any other means. To give it a name, we might call it "social voluntarism."

The Pawnee dwelling was circular, sixty feet or more in diameter, with a common circular fireplace in the center. Its internal arrangement was based upon a concept of bilateral symmetry. The entrance was by a long vestibule extending out to the east. At the western arc of the circle was a sacred altar, and along the northern and southern arcs were a series of booths, each the bed of a woman. The central position of the northern and southern arcs was held by one or more mature women, who were the major cultivators and managers of the food stores. They ate two meals a day, and the women located on opposite arcs, took turns, the one who supplied the evening meal alternating with the one who supplied the morning meal. Each woman supplied the food and service for the entire group of people living in the house, which might well comprise thirty to fifty people. Snacks could be taken by anyone in the household and

visitors were always provided with refreshment, as a matter of courtesy. In such cases, either the "south side" or the "north side" officiated, depending on the affiliation of the visitor. Except for the principle of alternation, each side constituted a complete work unit. Along the northern arc, the women at the east end near the entrance were the older women whose function was the care of the children. As a courtesy, they contributed supplementary food supplies and services to the principal woman of their side. At the western end of the arc nearest the sacred altar were located the beds of the young girls or younger women.

The young women performed supplementary services in the household, such as serving at meals and assisting their mothers in the fields. There were thus two such households within one circular structure, one on the north side, the other on the south side, operating for the common good alternately, but each internally self-sufficient.

A main preoccupation of a young woman was to attract a mature man of ability such as a hunter, warrior, medicine man, or administrator of village and tribal affairs to serve the household. The native term by which he was referred to, *kustawextsu* [he-who-sits-among-us] should give some indication of how he was regarded in the household.

As among the Iroquois, marriages among the Pawnee were relatively fluid. A Pawnee man of ability in his prime would try to acquire a young girl as a wife and move into her household; if he continued able and prominent, her younger sister would also be assigned to him. But as he grew older and his wife reached full maturity and assumed a major place in the household, the man might well return to his natural home. His mature wife would now be sought after by a young and ambitious man for the advantage such a marriage would bring him in well-being and social position, for under these circumstances he could entertain influential people. Older men went from household to household telling stories and distributing wisdom and always finding a welcome on that account.

The Principle of Social Voluntarism, as a Mode of Social Cohesion

The Pawnee household ran with considerable precision, but the surprising thing about its coordination was its complete social voluntarism. When asked how it was decided which side would take responsibility for the morning meal and which for the evening meal, answers indicated that there was considerable leeway, depending on circumstances. If the family on one side of the house was in the process of giving a big feast, the other side would cooperate by taking over the preparation of all regular meals, with the expectation that when the occasion arose the first side would reciprocate. If the leading man on one side planned to leave early for a

hunting expedition, his wife would take over the preparation of the morning meal for the whole household, and the other side would then fit in and take over the evening meal.

The Pawnee abhorred any suggestion of pressure. In preparation for a large-scale ceremony, a great deal of wood was needed. It was the women who collected wood and the men who visited the various households with their request, simply suggesting that wood was needed for the ceremony. The directors of the ceremony specifically cautioned their messengers to avoid any possible hint of pressure. For seasonal buffalo-hunting expeditions, the people regrouped themselves in tents centering around the ablest hunters. A woman who did not own a tent of her own would consider carefully whether she would join such a group for fear someone might inadvertently press her to do a job that she had not offered to do entirely spontaneously.

There can be no question that in both Iroquois and Pawnee households the industrious worker was universally esteemed and there was hardly an interpersonal relationship in which this fact was not manifest, regardless of other considerations of social status.

Village Social Coordination: The Voluntary Work Group

Another very common form of coordinated work group in tribal societies resembles the husking bee, quilting bee, barn raising, and roof raising of our own agrarian history. When news got round of such work to be done, there were plenty of spontaneous enlistments. Such enterprises had a festive quality because the reward was a shared feast as well as a sense of camaraderie. Such an operation is described by M. J. Herskovits for a Haitian village in which African custom is preserved:

> A working party is organized when a person having a field to be cleared passes the word about that he wishes to have a *combite*, as such a group is termed, come and do the work. At the same time the host prepares food for a feast. . . . As the workers gather, their labor is supervised by one individual who sees to it that the pace is adequate to get the work done in the time at hand, and that there are not too many shirkers. The workers, each with his hoe, form a line and there is always at least one, sometimes two and, in a very large *combite*, three drums to mark the rhythm for the songs and set the beat for the hoes. The stimulus of this group effort on the men is apparent in the results of their labor. In a single afternoon a field of several acres can be completely denuded of the growth of the dry season by a group that numbers about sixty-five workers.
>
> The festive nature of the undertaking is underlined by the feast that comes as darkness falls. The one who has supervised the work also supervises the distribution of the food, to make certain that the choicest tidbits and the largest portions go to the men who came earliest and worked most steadily. . . . That some come late and shirk their share of the labor is not overlooked when the food is distributed. Should a man gain the reputation that such conduct is habitual with

him, then his fellows will show little enthusiasm in helping him clear his field if it be necessary for him to ask their aid (1965).

A similar description is available for many African tribes and for peoples of the South Pacific and the Americas. Among the East African Kikuyu, weeding the garden may involve two kinds of cooperative effort, one where four or five men work together to weed the gardens of each in rotation, the other, a work bee with food and beer after the day's work (Kenyatta:1965):

> If a stranger happens to pass by at this time of enjoyment after labor, he will have no idea that these people who are now singing and laughing merrily, have completed their day's work. For after they have cleaned off the dust which they got from the fields, they look, in all respects, as though they have been enjoying themselves the whole day. This is why most . . . Europeans have erred by . . . not realizing that the African in his own environment does not count hours or work by the movement of the clock, but works with good spirit and enthusiasm to complete the task before him.

Two questions arise in connection with the world-wide appearance of work teams. First, is it "work" in our sense or is it recreation? And second, would it work in a society as large and complex as ours — and to what extent could we develop systems for producing goods and services on such a basis?

On the composite-household basis such as the Pawnee and Iroquois, it seems to me that many attempts at communal living in modern times are reaching out for just such a result. The difference is that the Iroquois and Pawnee households were a function of a clan, with loyalty to a common mythological and religious belief that joined them together in a common religious and symbolic idiom. It is the rationale for their mutuality. In work team or commune there must be a distinctive symbolism, that all value, aesthetically, emotionally, or religiously — be it even a poem or a mythical hero. The personal hero is less likely to be successful as there will be partisanship.

I cannot, of course, prove the connection, but the motivating symbolism of the Pawnee household goes back to their myth of creation and the present conception of the nature of the universe. According to the Pawnee, the First Cause of the world is the Cosmos. The stars and constellations were created first in order that they might create human beings in their image and continue to keep them alive by directing cosmic energy in their direction. Each person had an energy-generating star. There were also general directional cosmic streams coming to earth and into the roundhouse from the semicardinal directions — northeast, northwest, southwest, and southeast. Many more symbolic features were involved and, theologically, each Pawnee believed that if he failed to carry out a

series of ceremonies as a result of a star vision, life on earth would end. Each Pawnee village was under the tutelage of a star, and its chief continued to receive instructions through visions. It was the movements of the stars and the planets that gave the Pawnee a sense of the rhythm of their own ongoing. On a recent visit to Oklahoma, where I had gone to defend Pawnee civil rights, the older people were still relating the creation story and the cosmic mythology to their children and grandchildren.

BEYOND SOCIAL COHESION: THE WORK ETHIC

Our worker is forced to accept work roles that are predetermined by an impersonal hierarchy, while he is fitted like a cog into the machine rather than being its designer and maintainer. The only clear motivation is profit generated for an abstract "firm." Our worker is also forced to take for granted the personal and emotional benefits to himself and his society as accruing after a remote sequence of events. Unlike his tribal counterpart, our worker cannot find his major emotional work reward in interpersonal relationships, but is pressured by a supernaturally sanctioned imperative — an abstract ideology without relation to his fellow men — a mirror image of his factory and his boss.

In tribal life religious beliefs and practices have a unifying effect, promoting social and economic solidarity as Emile Durkheim observed and as we have seen in the clans. But the Protestant ethic concerns only the individual and abstract forces. This relation between Protestant ethic and our modes of work were explored at the beginning of this century by the German sociologist, Max Weber in *The protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism* (1930).

Weber's explanation of the connection between our economics and our religion is ingenious: Despite the fact that Christian doctrine in the monastic orders is dedicated to a life of the spirit, the monks attained great material achievements as a result of their diligent work; ascetic Protestant sects were noted for their economic success, especially in the early phase of modern capitalism. These characteristics were contrary to basic Christian doctrine in which the great Protestant reformers had anathematized the pursuit of riches as dangerous to the soul. The ordinary pursuit of riches is usually accompanied by a life of adventure and display and by marked religious indifference. How then did the monastic orders achieve wealth when their procedure was quite the opposite?

In Weber's view the accumulation of wealth came about as an unwitting by-product of special aspects of their religious ideology. His line of reasoning was as follows: (1) Both Puritan religion and capitalist enterprise are characterized to an unusual degree by a systematization of life; this common characteristic suggests that the two are

related through a third causal factor: (2) Contrasting Calvinist theology with Roman Catholic and Lutheran, we find that Calvinism, as expressed in the pastoral exhortations of seventeenth-century Puritan divines emphasized the doctrine of predestination. They believed that everyone must face the ultimate uncertainty of his fate. Nevertheless, true believers could quiet their consciences by engaging in a zealous and self-denying round of daily activities, mindful that God had put the resources of his created world at their disposal; on the Day of Judgment they would be responsible to Him for the single-minded, work-oriented use of all their powers in his service while denying themselves the full fruits of their labors, in a kind of self-punishing regime that would surely count with the Deity.

Weber concluded that, accordingly, Puritan wealth was an unintended consequence of the anxieties aroused by the doctrine of predestination. Because members of the Calvinist congregation accepted the interpretations of that doctrine offered by the Puritan divines, they led frugal active lives that resulted in the accumulation of wealth. Weber acknowledged that further research on this relationship was needed, especially documentary research on diaries and autobiographies of seventeenth-century entrepreneurs that might contain direct evidence concerning the relationship between religious belief and economic activity. His essay, *The Protestant sects* (1906), provides one such supplement by describing the methods used to inculcate moral tenets in members of the Puritan sects.

There can be no question that what distinguishes our concept of work uniquely from any of the examples of labor in tribal societies is anxiety and driving pressure. Esteem is given not for the job accomplished, but for the driving, nerve-wracking pressure to which we subject ourselves. We expend a great deal of energy in sport and leisure activities, but only when we tempt destiny by winning or losing do we draw admiration. We emphasize the element of drive alone by respecting the amateur who concentrates entirely on the element of self-flagellation and receives the possible sign of a favored destiny as distinguished from his losing opponent by winning — "Let the *best* man win!"

Today we are faced with the need to relieve ourselves of this draining anxiety on our social energy resources and bring these resources to bear with maximum effectiveness on the tasks that will maintain our common life; at the same time we must develop creative satisfaction for each of us according to his needs and aptitudes.

The description by an Indonesian tribesman of the advantages of more than one working together shows us clearly that while they pace each other, anxiety as to who "the winner" will be is not involved, but rather, as indicated by the final sentence, that the job get done quickly:

A man toils by himself, goes along as he pleases; he works slowly and pauses every time he feels like having a smoke. . . . But when two men work together, each tries to do the most. One man thinks to himself, "My back aches and I feel like resting, but my friend there is going on: I must go on too, or I shall feel ashamed." The other man thinks to himself, "My arms are tired and my back is breaking, but I must not be the first to pause." Each man strives to do the most and the garden is finished quickly (Herskovits 1965:106).

Where all work was "Volunteer Work": Social Voluntarism as a Stimulus

It is instructive to examine the actions of the Pawnee Indians of Nebraska who were strongly committed to social voluntarism, that is an implicit sense of responsibility to the entire society for which no explicit code is needed. It is fervently to be hoped that we can eventually evolve such a society.

If we could return to the Pawnee Indians in their large circular house in Nebraska, about fifty people would be sitting around the fireplace, waiting to be served their eleven o'clock meal. The circular wall is a seven-foot collar of sod surmounted by a high conical thatched roof, with a framework of radial rafters. It is spring, and during the winter some of the rafters have rotted. One of the men on the north side looks up and remarks, "I think I'll go out and look around for willows — about seven of those rafters need replacing." A man on the south side says, "I think I'll do that too. I saw some good ones down by the river last week." One of the women says, "I'll sharpen my hoe; I think I'll get some thatch grass." In turn, each chimes in until all the necessary materials for repairing the roof are accounted for. This is a rather extensive construction job, requiring eighty-six to ninety "man-woman" hours and the involvement of kinsmen, friends and neighbors. I, the anthropologist, begin to get anxious and I ask, "When do they make a plan?" "Plan? They don't make any plan!"

As it begins, the participation gathers momentum. Materials are gathered with increasing cooperation from friends and well-wishers, and they are stacked up in proper order around the periphery of the foundation. The women are assembling supplies in a neighbor's house for a large feast for all who helped in any way, including "watchers," — influential men of the village, relatives. The north side women are working in the household of the neighbors to the north of them, the south side women in the household to the south. Young men in their twenties, hearing of the enterprise, are particularly likely to volunteer for the hardest labor. They don't have to be told. They just do things willingly. "Such people do not have to be asked," the old men would say; "when I was a boy I used to do such things without being asked," meaning that one hears of something of this kind that has to be done and one simply volunteers. A person who

acts in this way is referred to as "a person whose ears are standing erect," that is, an alert person.

It might in fact be possible for us to develop social morale of that kind in our global postindustrial village, providing for our needs through social impulse. I think the time has come when we can see our road to its accomplishment. As we clarify our goals, we have fantastic technological resources — a world two-way or multiple communications system, computers, automation, scientific principles, management techniques, a vast volunteer work tradition and a birthright based on a long, long primate history and continuity of life and the universe. Most heartening is the emerging consciousness in many quarters of what we really do need in order to realize our humanity, particularly in terms of dissatisfaction with "work."

THE SHIFT FROM INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION TO SOCIAL PRODUCTION: NEW CATEGORIES AND A NEW SOCIETY MUST BE ALLOWED TO EVOLVE

All this shows us that many of the old categories of our economy and in fact of our lives, are breaking down and we are moving toward greater and greater development of a coherent life style — a total life, not fragments or fractions of experience. Our division of labor has reached the end of the line; sex and age are losing their primacy as categories for the determination of a person's work. In man's two million years, there has been a steady progression toward fragmentation of the task of maintaining society and we have been steadily losing sight of that society. The interrelationship of people as the *only* primary resource has moved further and further away from our thinking. It is only within that context that *the person* fulfills himself, and only persons can develop an interrelationship.

Our perpetual need to reassure ourselves by endless counting has also led us to a dead end. Just as Weizenbaum (1972:610) has portrayed the computer as a total idiot, so Wassily Leontief, one of the most imaginative economists of our time, has shown how, in our preoccupation with the units we count, we have lost sight of how those units are defined. Most people assume that the study of economics is the study of our material life. Nothing could be further from the truth. Leontief in a seminal article (1966a) indicates some of the issues:

> . . . both the theoretical analyst and the antitheoretical empiricist must rely on crude verbal generalizations as the only means they can begin with to reduce to manageable proportions the seemingly unfathomable variety of immediately observed facts.

As we move from emphasis on the accumulation of goods to emphasis on

the quality of life, we shift our attention from *industrial production* to *social production.*

A society that shifts its emphasis from quantity to quality must find some means of meeting the needs of such a life. What tasks will need to be performed and how will we draw to them the people who will undertake the responsibility for their performance? Keeping within the material mode, Leontief undertakes a categorization of a whole economy in terms of an input-output table. In the table the transactions that characterized the United States economy during 1947 are summarized in terms of forty-two major departments of production, distribution, transportation, and consumption, of which households are one department. Also included in the forty-two groupings are such items as personal repair services, nonprofit organizations, government, exports to foreign countries, eating and drinking places, and others. As Leontief explains it (1966b:15–20):

> Economic theory seeks to explain the material aspects and operations of our society in terms of interactions among such variables as supply and demand or wages and prices. Economists have generally based their analyses on relatively simple data — such quantities as gross national product, the interest rate, price and wage levels. But in the real world things are not so simple. Between a shift in wages and the ultimate working out of its impact upon prices there is a complex series of transactions in which actual goods and services are exchanged among real people. It is true, of course, that the individual transactions, like individual atoms and molecules, are far too numerous for observation and description in detail. But it is possible, as with physical particles, to reduce them to some kind of order by classifying and aggregating them into groups. This is the procedure employed by input-output analysis in improving the grasp of economic theory upon the facts with which it is concerned in every real situation.

It is of interest to note that two major categories of work, universally regarded by us as "nonwork" — housework and volunteer work — are included by Leontief in his table. The great social and economic value of the services that are produced in these categories are left out of our ordinary economic and social calculations — and it will be to our dire cost. Supported by private sources, the nature and social importance of our needs are effectively submerged. As the household based on the breeding pair alone is finally abandoned as an anachronism, there will be a need for household tasks to be rationalized, and public provision will have to be made for this. These services can well be classified into food services, maintenance of household objects and equipment, clothing maintenance, including repairs, cleaning, and laundry, and child care. Whether the limited family unit is replaced by communal living or individual occupation of living units on the basis of preference and convenience, services will need to be available locally or regionally.[4]

[4] See Engels (1970:51) on the development of our so-called "biological" or "nuclear" family from the Roman slave plantation under the patriarchate, with the patriarch having

It is also essential that the services provided by voluntary work be inventoried, classified, and publicly provided for. They can no longer be regarded as marginal or occasional services; they are obviously vital to our survival. The motivations that induce people to involve themselves in these services, must be carefully studied. They constitute an indispensable source of knowledge that may help us to understand the question of what would motivate people to choose one or another essential activity as the main focus of their "work energy."

Another category in which considerable energy is expended is that of leisure and recreation. Both are quite definitely classified as "nonwork." Sebastian de Grazia (1962) spells out the distinction: for the person who works, in the present definition of the term, i.e. under duress, recreation is required as a relief from his self-fulfilling expectation of anxiety and pressure; in fact our recreation, although often equated with play, can be as anxiety-ridden as our work: "We had better enjoy ourselves *right now*, or we'll be back at work with the pressure on again." For the person who has selected the paths in which he wants to channel his activities from among a number of alternatives, the pressure that generates anxiety will not be there. Activities that we term work and activities that we term leisure may be closely parallel or even the same. In exploring people's attitudes toward their work, an interesting question was asked: "What would you do with the extra two hours if you had a twenty-six-hour day?" (HEW 1971:16). Two out of three college professors and one out of four lawyers said they would use the extra time in a work-related activity.

Factors involving people's feelings are not easy to work with statistically, but to me it would seem that for some of these people, the element of a particular "calling" in de Grazia's terms is present. De Grazia mentions the clergy, the career ranks of the military and government

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full rights of life and death over slaves, wives and children: "*Famulus* means domestic slave, and *familia* is the total number of slaves belonging to one man. . . . The term was invented by the Romans to denote a new social organism whose head ruled over wife and children and a number of slaves and was invested under Roman paternal power with rights of life and death over them all. . . . Such a form of family shows the transition of the pairing family to monogamy. In order to make certain of the wife's fidelity and therefore of the paternity of the children, she is delivered over unconditionally into the power of the husband; if he kills her, he is only exercising his rights."

In tribal societies, the wife retains her membership in her own clan and the man she marries continues to be answerable to them for her treatment and her life. When Engels refers to "pairing marriage" he refers to that almost universal condition, while the special historical development of monogamy as an expression of patriarchy is characteristic of Roman historical tradition, after the separation of the Greeks and Latins.

Karl Marx (Engels 1970) added: "The modern family contains in germ not only slavery (*servitus*), but also serfdom, since from the beginning it is related to agricultural services. It contains *in miniature* all the contradictions which later extend throughout society and its state."

(although I would question these last two in view of recent events in which the "calling" dissolves itself in a search for power), the artist and the man of letters, the physician, and the professor in this context. De Grazia elaborates with the observation that they do not work but have a vocation, something they are called to by nature, inclination, God, taste, or the Muses. However, a well-known actor recently said in a television interview, "I would not call acting art; it's all commercial. It's a job and I do it to support myself and my family." It would seem that we have "taken the joy out of life" to quite a considerable degree and succeeded mightily in souring our creativity. Nevertheless, the question raised by our prominent actor is one that obviously suggests itself.

HOW DO WE MANAGE TO MAKE A LIVING IN THIS CHANGING SCENE?

Making a living through our work involves our system of exchange. As our exchange values shift from products to services and qualities, how do we measure exchange? There is no question that, compared with barter, our system of money as a rough standard of value has been a great social invention. As an ultimate standard of value, however, we have relied on gold and lived under the illusion that we do have a standard, quantitative measure as a basis for trade and exchange. The passing of this oversimplified ideology is evident today.

The fictional character of this idea and the arbitrary nature of this standard of value are becoming more and more apparent as world fluctuations in both currencies and gold confront us. Although we are unwilling to admit it, our exchange is based on mutual trust within the nation. The unsightly green rectangles of paper with a national hero printed on them are passed from hand to hand, and goods and services are willingly surrendered because we have some understanding and some identification with one another as fellow nationals, a matter that has nothing whatever to do with gold.

In his classic work on prehistoric Europe, George Grant MacCurdy (1924:217, Figure 253; 216, Figure 352; 249–250) suggests that the sun symbol, an ancient Upper Paleolithic symbol which appears on a baton of reindeer horn, continues into the metal ages as a symbol of obvious religious significance which can be linked with gold. Throughout the ages in Egypt and in Europe it was known that gold was the only international trade item that the people of the Orient would accept. In the ancient Near East, going back to Sumeria 6,000 years ago, trade was a temple function, and we have Jesus chasing out the money changers from the temple where they were exchanging money for temple coins so that the people could buy birds for sacrifice.

We have failed to examine our preoccupation with gold, but it is certainly an irrational conceptual survival from a very ancient time. The whole subject merits continued detailed study. We may compare our attitudes throughout history with those of the Incas who also had gold, fashioned it into jewelry for the aristocracy, and considered the emperor a child of the sun but nevertheless gave the metal neither veneration nor used it as currency in any form. The sun was one of several major deities beyond which was Viracocha, creator, maintainer of order in the universe, and vaguely conceived as the supreme being of philosophical speculation.

In Mexico, and throughout the Americas, the Indians never ceased to be amazed at the Spaniards' insatiable hunger for raw gold. They expressed their contempt for the melting down of masterpieces of the jeweler's art into ugly lumps. In the Aztec markets of Mexico, quills of gold dust were only one item that served the barter system; beans, pieces of cotton cloth, vanilla, and other items were also used. Perhaps a thorough study of gold and its symbolism in time and place the world over might help us to realize the unbelievable irrationality of our evolution.

In most tribal societies, exchange occurs on a barter basis for subsistence goods and goods for daily use. Side by side with this utility economy, is one in which the relationship is more like gift-giving and characterized by social formality and ritual. Special tokens given or exchanged designate the relationship as one in which the people "honor" each other or establish a status relationship in which one of the parties is of higher status or both are equal, dealing in mutual respect. In other words, this type of exchange is characterized by formal ritual and symbolism. All peoples who exchange in such a relationship make a clear distinction between it and the way they behave when ordinary exchange for the sake of the goods themselves is involved. In the latter, bargaining and matter-of-fact actions that culminate in an objective exchange are the rule. In our society, gift exchange is a relationship about which we feel very self-conscious, unlike other societies in which the exchange aspect is taken for granted. Our strongly expressed notion is that gifts are given freely as a mark of esteem, with no expectation whatever of a return in kind. However, there is no question that this is a fictitious picture of the real state of affairs; we certainly do expect a return gift of some kind of value equivalence or we feel we have been put down or even insulted.

Our present circumstances demand that we reassess our whole concept of exchange, including the gift-type category and establish new ones that will allow us to develop a suitable ideology for the exchange relationship. This calls for a clear distinction between currency for subsistence needs on the one hand and exchange media for the pursuit of wealth and prestige on the other. Even today we consider certain items suitable for gift-giving — others are too mundane. Such ideas as negative income tax

or a guaranteed minimum income are designed to take care of the subsistence category of needs which must be every person's birthright; by doing this, we will be able to freely cultivate the field of imaginative exchange.

The merging of the two categories into one monetary system, has provided the basis for highly exploitative relations which build up power over another person's survival instead of providing for his place in the structure of society. The building of a changing social structure is a creative social activity, the control of other people's survival is destructive of fundamental human values. When we are able more fully to realize our humanity, we will aim to participate positively in both the survival of all and in the building of society. We will have need, among other things, of a group of new and humanistic economists.[5]

WHAT IS THE LEAST A PERSON NEEDS TO MAINTAIN HIS LIFE?

When we speak of work, we speak of our way of maintaining our lives. What is our minimum need? There may be a way of calculating a minimum for all of humanity, but in any case, within the human spectrum, it depends upon what parents you were born to and how you lived and ate from then on. Your life cannot be calculated for its whole span or even very much ahead. How and why do you try to maintain it? This depends on how you foresee its possibilities. In what "universe" do you live? In what time and in what place and in what tradition? There is always the elemental fact that *man must eat*, but equally compelling circumstances determine that *man cannot live by bread alone.* In raw nature man is always in danger of attack, sickness, and unexpected natural disaster. The primate order, compared with other mammals, is weak, small, and slow. All the nonhuman primates act upon the fact that mutual group protection is indispensable to their individual survival. Each individual has a part in the group tasks and must act in a coordinated manner spontaneously.

Each subhuman primate group has its own specific set of vocal symbols

[5] The *New York Times* (20 July, 1973:2) printed a news item from London to the effect that the British Government had announced that it had decided to introduce legislation that would make the payment of welfare benefits part of the income-tax system. This new approach, which was worked out by an all-party committee of Parliament, would include a so-called negative income tax. "The adoption by the Government of the new approach called the tax credit system was announced in the House of Commons today by Anthony Barber, Chancellor of the Exchequer. The introduction of legislation is to begin in the next session of Parliament, and it is expected to take four to five years to put into effect. Members of the Labor Party have some objection to the manner in which it would be carried out, although the Labor Party is in favor of the negative income tax in principle."

unique to that group, which means that its members have their own estimate of the local situations that require such signals. At bottom, the need for group life is due to the fact that there must be more watchfulness than one individual can manage. The early human primate, with its change of habitat to the open plain, had to include food and food getting among the social functions, whereas nonhuman primates never share food. Age and sex became more sharply differentiated principles for the division of labor as the mature males ranged far afield and the females, young and old, retained a temporary home base within a more restricted area. All foregathered and shared out their food. The knowledge of food storage and the production of plants and animals resulted in an increase of population and more and more subdivisions, with the coordinating function mushrooming in scope and complexity.

In terms of these two trends, we have now gone beyond the point of maximum value — the fragmentation of tasks and the coordination into a pyramid so large that we have lost sight of the people who are doing the tasks to fulfill their own needs. The symbol system of the Puritan work ethic is still very strong among us, but in its relation to economics the theological focus has moved on to a major emphasis on the produced materials themselves. The theological rationale and the spiraling progression of industrial production have produced two opposite "ethics" — the *work* ethic, and the *business* ethic as parallel systems; a third line of values is the *church* ethic of humanism and love for fellow men.

The maturing young person has to face a schizophrenic situation in which he learns the work ethic at home; then in the outside world of business he learns the business ethic and if he does not, he will be a social and economic outcast; his "Sunday stance" is the human ethic for purposes of conversation. This schizophrenic demand upon their motivations has forced many young people to seek out older, seminal religions and new adaptations because they cannot proceed without developing a consistent rationale for their lives.

Two relatively recent books by economists deal with this subject: Kenneth E. Boulding's *Beyond economics: essays on society, religion and ethics* (1970) and Walter Weisskopfs *Alienation and economics* (1973). Boulding focuses on the inherent qualitative character of materiality with which the economist deals and Weisskopf on the intensification in recent times of materiality as the total means of our life fulfillment and hence the goal of our lives, expressed in the increasing development of our consumer economy and extending not only to things as such but to bodily sensations and the intensive preoccupation with sexuality and, I might add, violence. Weisskopf also treats the role of advertising in associating qualities with things which are not spontaneous human responses but designed to attract random and sensational motivations rather than value-oriented life goals, a total perversion of the process of association

and symbolism. He concludes that we should recognize the multidimensionality of the human personality and cultivate its many facets — receptivity to others, to nature, to art, to feelings, inner life, intuition and insight, instead of the one-dimensionality of the technical and economic that threatens to lead to our destruction.

Boulding considers that the most potent coordinating agencies in our society are the family and the nation. It is indicative of the speed with which we are moving that both are disintegrating rapidly. There is an intense development of multinational firms and a movement of labor to countries where industrial and professional opportunities are concentrated. In Europe a wide variety of nationals have been attracted to work in Scandinavia, Switzerland, West Germany, France and England. In the United States recent immigrants from all over the world — from Latin America and the West Indies for menial labor and from Asiatic states for medicine, nursing, engineering, and technical research — are helping to blur the old national identities. Substitutes for the old family way of living, based on the ever-ready service of women, are developing in a variety of communal arrangements and single-living styles, sometimes including a child to be raised. Public facilities for children will have to increase, including permanent "child hostels" everywhere, for both permanent and transient residence.

Again, tribal life offers us some analogies and guidelines. Tribal family units encompass a much wider circle of individuals. They are not limited by genetic pairing but group the individuals around a mythologic principle of clan origin or clan identity, giving ideological and symbolic definition rather than a biological basis to their common interrelationship and mutual concern. Within this circle, there is a great deal of reckoning on the part of individuals as to the degree of concern of one for the other; this is carried on reciprocally. They remember that so-and-so was especially helpful on a number of occasions and so maintain an openness to return the favor in kind when the occasion presents itself. To us it is surprising how much remembrance of a very wide circle of people they maintain. If there has been no occasion for some time when kin concern for a given person can be expressed, the person who wants to demonstrate the viability of the relationship will send a suitable gift from time to time.

Right now, it is hard to say what our more stable group identities will consist of. But it is clear that whatever group identities we do develop will probably be based on recognized common qualities or common objective experiences and these identifications, if they are to function to develop interpersonal group cooperation, will have to be symbolized by the creative efforts of poets and artists. In her book, *Patterns of culture* (1959), Ruth Benedict tried to capture the unique wholeness of a group or tribe with a touch of the poet. We will have to learn to distinguish the unique wholeness of a group by whatever symbols and whatever criteria

we can devise. The degree to which we achieve this will determine how well and how long the group will function as a focus for interpersonal relationships. Samuel Z. Klausner, in his study of total societies (1967), attempted this in a more "scientific" mode. But I believe the effectiveness depends upon the aesthetic creativity with which the group identification is portrayed and denoted.

In our attempts to get the world's tasks done by people who are moved by a sense of social values and social responsibilities, the imagery in terms of which these are established will be one of its most vital elements. People will group themselves in terms of common feelings. The lines between work, volunteer work, house work, and leisure will blur and fade. Who will organize this vast network of tasks and operations? Eventually we will learn how to do it by consensus, arrived at through continuing communication. The technology of almost immediate communication is no longer impossible. I think we can finally move from industrial production to social production and from the motivations of anxiety and terror of the work ethic to the social tasks before us and the personal fulfillments that they yield. We may yet realize social voluntarism as a way of life — by posing questions — not by top-heavy schemes.

APPENDIX 1: SUMMARIES AND EXTRACTS FROM ARTICLES IN NEW YORK NEWSPAPERS DURING 1971–1973

December 27, 1971, the American Association for the Advancement of Science held a special symposium at its annual meeting in Philadelphia on "Technology and the Humanization of Work," reviewed 28 December in the *New York Times* by Walter Sullivan:

Modes of work and life-styles that were acceptable in the past are increasingly felt as oppressive by young workers in factories, offices and development labs.

The article went on to state that

Concern over morale of the industrial worker is not limited to the capitalist world. Some months ago, it was the subject of a meeting of specialists from Eastern as well as Western nations. The Chinese communists have attacked the problem by installing selected workers alongside specialists on the managerial level and by insisting that the specialists spend time in the physical operations of the factory or the farm for a few weeks or months of the year.

In the *New York Times*, Sunday, 10 June, 1973, accompanied by a photograph of John R. Coleman, president of Haverford College, appeared an article:

COLLEGE HEAD'S SABBATICAL: 2 MONTHS AT MENIAL JOBS. Dr. Coleman felt that he had gotten too far from reality; he worked as a garbage man, ditch digger, dishwasher, quick-service counterman and as a farmhand in his native Ontario, up at 4:30 each morning, working 13 hours a day in milkshed and barns. . . . As chairman of the Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia, he quite his ditchdigging job to preside over the bank's monthly meeting on March 2, returned to Boston

and resumed his job search, landing one as porter-dishwasher from which he was discharged within an hour without explanation. "I wanted to get away from the world of words and politics and parties — the things a president does. . . . As a college president you begin to take yourself very seriously and think you have power that you don't. You forget elementary things about people. I wanted to relearn things I'd forgotten."

Other headlines and news accounts:

HEW. STUDY FINDS JOB DISCONTENT IS HURTING NATION (Concerning the report, "*Work in America,*" *New York Times,* 22 December, 1972:1, 14).

CONFLICTING THEORIES ON EFFICIENT WORK: REPETITION VS. SATISFACTION (*New York Times*, 22 December, 1972:14).

CAN A WORKER FIND HAPPINESS IN A DULL JOB? (Extensive review of a book by Harold L. Sheppard and Neal Q. Herrick, *Where Have All the Robots Gone? New York Times*, 24 December, 1972, Section F:3).

GETTING RID OF OBSTACLES TO BUSINESS EFFICIENCY

The commission is engaged in that most contemporary of pursuits, consciousness-raising — create more awareness of the value of change.

(On the work of the National Commission on Productivity, John Steward, and John E. Morrisey, his assistant, *New York Times*, 24 December, 1972, Section F:3.)

THE RANKS OF DISCONTENT — Prof. Chris Argyris, a specialist in organizational behavior at the Harvard Graduate School of Education believes there is enough evidence to indicate that "work is a critical variable in mental health problems." He goes on to observe . . . that the note of urgency in the report is justified. His only criticism was that not enough emphasis was placed on top management, where he says mistrust and lack of candor between executives foster a similar outlook among lower-level management. The result is lack of innovation, dissatisfaction, low productivity. (Commentary on HEW Task Force report, *Work in America* in *New York Times*, 31 December, 1972:10.)

ADS TO PUSH WORK ETHIC HERE — President Nixon has said that the work ethic holds that labor is good in itself, according to religious teachings and American tradition, and "that is why most of us consider it immoral to be slothful." As reported by Commerce Secretary Peterson, the $10 million campaign by the National Advertising Council will try to persuade workers that "productivity is not a 12-letter word representing certain people getting exploited by others." . . . But in Japan it's ingrained, and major discontent in Great Britain, cradle of Anglo-Saxon virtues, and Germany, the locale of Teutonic industriousness, where time off for sickness and boredom is on the increase, all show signs of malaise with work conditions as they are now. (*New York Post*, 27 December, 1972:48.)

JAVITS' RX FOR BORED WORKERS; Making Every Worker a Capitalist Through Stock-Option and Profit-Sharing Plans — At a luncheon of the New York State Bar Association, he warned that it was "vital to deal with this worker alienation." (*New York Post*, January, 1973.)

THE NEW STEELWORKERS — NO PRIDE IN THIS DUST — The author, Bennett Kremen, a high school drop-out in the mid-1950's had worked in the steel mills in Chicago; his article is an excerpt of an article published in 1972 recounting his experience

during a brief return engagement, his forthcoming book to be published by Dial Press. Reports a new preponderance of black workers (70%). In answer to his question, "What happened to the Polish people who used to work these places?" the reply from a fellow applicant for the job, a huge blond Viet Nam veteran: "They're still around — the older ones mostly. A lot of 'em moved away, though, and never want to come back around here anymore." The better educational level of the young workers is noted and a fundamental change in attitude; "not all these young men are so bitter, and some even work hard — when they show up. But neither whites, blacks, skilled workers, laborers, militants nor conservatives — and there are conservatives — are thankful to the company for providing them with jobs." (*New York Times*, 7 January, 1973, Section 3:1, 17.)

REDESIGN DULL JOBS? LEADERS WARY (ibid.: 17).

COMPANIES RAISE ROLE OF WORKERS: Prof. R. W. Revans, a former coal-miner, a former manpower chief for the British Coal Board and now industrial adviser in Brussels, said, "We are now part of a changing social ethic. If leaderships are going to go on existing, they must do so by persuasion, not power. This means compromise, consensus, negotiation. Instead of authority we must think in terms of negotiation." Develop New Work Patterns to Reduce Alienation — International and national firms are mentioned: Sanyo, a Japanese electronics company; Swedish automobile Volvo; Italian carmaker Fiat; and the American Telephone and Telegraph Company, the Netherlands; the Bell Telephone System in the United States. (*New York Times*, 28 January, 1973:5.)

COMING TO WORK WHENEVER YOU WANT — Concerning Flextime which allows an employee to choose, within guidelines — his own starting and finishing times: The plan, a European import, is being used mainly in American affiliates, i.e. Lufthansa of East Meadows, L.I. and Sandoz-Wander in East Hanover, N.J.; Scott Paper Company is also experimenting with "adaptable hours." It is not the same as staggered hours, in which an entire office or department adopts an earlier or later starting time in recognition of the difficulties of traveling to work. Nestlé in White Plains: "It gives every employee — from the newest clerk to the president — options on use of the 35-hour, five-day week. Arrival can be from 8 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. Lunch of at least 30 minutes between noon and 1:30 p.m. and departure from 4 to 6 p.m.; Friday leaving at 3 p.m. if at least 2 half-hour lunch hours have been taken." (*New York Times*, 4 February, 1973, Section F:1, 5.)

WORKERS ROTATE JOBS TO FORESTALL BOREDOM. Topeka, Kansas — In General Foods pet-food plant, a 26-year-old production worker and his 60 "blue-collar" co-workers all get a chance to do every major job in the plant, from unloading with a fork-lift truck to making complex tests in quality control laboratory. They decide free of supervisors how to spend their time. (*New York Times*, 5 February, 1973:1, 57.)

LOUIS HARRIS POLL: WORKERS WANT MORE SAY ON JOBS — Approximately 6 in 10 persons in America who work for a living say they would be "very willing to work harder" if they "had more to say about the kind of work" they do and "how they do it" if they could "work more independently." (*New York Post*, 22 February, 1973:14.)

BEATING BOREDOM ON THE JOB — Emma Rothschild, author of a forthcoming book, *Paradise Lost, the Decline of the Auto-Industrial Age*," Random House. Description of automotive experiments in Sweden. Worker discontent and experiments. Begun by Volvo 8 years ago. (*Saturday Review*, 12 March, 1973:18.)

THREE-DAY WEEK IS SPREADING IN SOUTHERN TEXTILE MILLS, *Roanoke, Ala.* (*New York Times*, 25 March, 1973:70).

SEN. PERCY SAYS U.S. IS ON "BRINK OF A MAJOR BREAKTHROUGH" IN ATTEMPT TO CHANGE IDEAS ON WORK — Sen. Charles H. Percy, Republican of Illinois, addressed a "national conference on the Changing Work Ethic" in the New York Hilton Hotel, one of three meetings sponsored by Urban Research Corporation. Most of the representatives of major corporations and other business and management consulting concerns at the conference appeared to agree with the speaker that "quality of work is an idea whose time has come."

Experts of some of the companies involved who described the programs included the Chase Manhattan Bank, Corning Glass, Donnelly Mirrors, which makes automobile mirrors; the General Motors Corporation and General Foods Corporation, and General Electric and others.

Donnelly Mirrors . . . has divided its work force into teams with decision-making powers . . . also shares productivity gains and guarantees that its workers will not be unemployed because of technology.

ENRICHING WORKERS' JOB TIME — 33 Indianapolis phone company employees compile all the Indiana phone directories in an assembly line which performs 21 different steps. Recently the company had each employee independently put together his own directory and perform each step. The department's 90 percent turnover rate dropped sharply and its error rate also declined. A similar experiment was tried by Corning Glass in the hotplate manufacture department at its Medfield, Mass., plant: with each worker making his own hotplate from start to inspection; the production increased by 84 percent and absenteeism had fallen from 8 to 1% and "controllable rejects" once 23%, had all but disappeared. These figures were taken from a report to the Urban Research Corporation-sponsored conference on the "Changing Work Ethic" noted above, attended by 400 labor, management and government representatives and academic experts on worker alienation. (*New York Post*, 28 March, 1973.)

JOB ENRICHMENT: NICE BUT NO CURE-ALL —[By] David Sirota, associate professor of management at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania and president of David Sirota Associates, Inc., management consultants. He condensed this article from one he wrote for the Conference Board's Record. Mentions American Telephone and Telegraph Company's experiments in the 1960s: 18 of the 19 projects successful, 9 outstandingly successful — Texas Instruments, Maytag, Motorola and International Business Machines, uniformly successful according to published reports. In one company studied, in some departments more than 80% of the workers felt underutilized. Surveys of white-collar workers indicated some severe job-content problems in specific departments. For example, workers who were assembling office equipment 17 separate operations were combined into five "whole jobs" according to the five major mechanisms of the machine. The effect of job enrichment is to raise the skill demands that a job places on its occupant to ameliorate manpower underutilization of workers' time and, more precisely, talent, as opposed to the more conventional management concern with the under-utilization of workers' time. (*New York Times*, 6 May, 1973:12.)

HUMANIZING THE AUTO ASSEMBLY LINE — From Sodertalje, Sweden: Saab-Scandia and Volvo automobile companies experiments phasing out the assembly line. Experiment has been, in addition to other details, something of a public relations sensation. Fourteen different television film features all over the world, endless

visits by journalists and close examination by production engineers from General Motors, Fiat and others.

Says Kaj Holmelious, in charge of planning and coordination on Saab's production engineering staff: ". . . we do have more applications for jobs in our engine plant than for other production units. We are able to employ more women, who make up 60 to 70% of the labor force in the engine plant, and we also find the production group system gives us more labor flexibility. . . . Before the final group assembly stage, the rest of the workers have been machine-tooling and assembling engine sections — crankshafts, connecting rods and manifolds. The basic engine block then moves off on a trolley resembling a supermarket shopping cart into one of six assembly bays manned almost entirely by women, three women at each area."

N.B. It is of interest that when the program was first initiated, the rather well-educated Swedish male proved reluctant to take jobs in the factory and they hired foreign workers and women who were more likely to be tractable. Women have apparently remained in the work force. (*New York Post*, 14 May, 1973:14.)

G.E. WORKERS UPSTATE ARE DISCONTENTED WITH WORK ITSELF — The smelly air, the fact that they don't see the sun all day, the exhaustion, the boredom, the impossibility of supporting a family on the pay with rising prices, the endless push, push, push of the supervisor, makes the workers wish they could do something else, but under the circumstances regard it as "a job" with a certain depressed resignation. (*New York Times*, 26 May, 1973:33.)

INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACY; IT CATCHES ON FASTER IN EUROPE THAN U.S. — David Jenkins, the author of the article is an American writer living in Europe — his book "Job Power: Blue and White Collar Democracy," Doubleday and Co. Inc., to be published this month.

"A widespread movement is under way in Western Europe to combat worker alienation and job dissatisfaction through industrial democracy: the statutory granting of genuine decision-making power to workers at all levels."

Despite the similarity of purpose in American moves to relieve worker alienation, their outlook is entirely different. In Europe, legislation and substantive practice (West German "Mitbestimmung") give labor and capital equality on company "supervisory boards" (somewhat comparable to American boards of directors) in coal and steel industries and minority positions in other industries. Both unions and Willy Brandt's Social Democratic Party have long sought to extend the equality concept to all industries. The Social Democrats have now persuaded their coalition partners, the Free Democrats to accept the expansion of the system, and a joint program is now being drawn up.

While a number of large and small companies initiated these projects (Shell, Philips, Norsk Hydro, Volvo and Saab), using methods superficially similar to some of the more advanced participative techniques used in America, raising productivity and increasing job satisfaction, the American firm pursues this purpose as a sophisticated management technique. In Europe, however, it is widely understood that such management innovations were part of a broad-based movement toward industrial democracy which is being built into government regulations. Among the reasons for American indifference to industrial democracy, one especially large reason is the traditional and accepted pattern of intra-company power:

"The revered ideology of free enterprise rewards the successful man not only with material gain but also with power over those below him. Managers who have been trained to believe that power over people is one of the prerequisites of success

and who are trained to believe that only authoritarian companies can survive, are, understandably, not especially enthusiastic about democracy.

"Despite the current flurry of interest in participative management, only a tiny minority of companies are applying non-authoritarian techniques to any appreciable extent. And in some United States companies that have initiated advanced participative methods, executives have attempted — often successfully — to kill off innovations that threaten to upset the orthodox authoritarian structure.

"While European political leaders are striving to give workers more power over their lives, the President of the United States is pointing out that the average American is like 'the child in the family' who has to be told what to do." The popularity of industrial democracy could surge rapidly and unexpectedly. Great numbers of employees are abundantly aware of the dissatisfaction with their jobs, but scarcely anyone in the United States recognizes the large-scale improvements that are possible, practicable and desirable.

Union leaders who have objected on the grounds that workers become too content, or that they do not receive extra pay for extra productivity — instead of correcting these aspects, as European labor leaders have done, have elected to throw out the whole question. (The United Auto Workers, where Irving Bluestone is vice-president, wants to obtain more control for the workers over their own jobs and eventually over management of the companies, is cited by David Jenkins as a notable exception.)

On the European scene, "These projects have demonstrated two main points: that if a company can put employees' intelligence and creativity to work, profitability is increased. . . . As an example, Nobo Fabrikker, a Norwegian maker of office furniture and heating elements, began an experiment in the nineteen-sixties in a single small department. It removed the foreman, abolished the conventional assembly line, trained workers to perform a variety of tasks and allowed them to organize in groups to plan, assign and schedule work among themselves."

Legislation is being pushed or at least considered in other countries: In Denmark, whose Premier Anker Jorgensen is urging the passage of an "economic democracy" bill to give employees more decision power and to create a profit-sharing fund. In France, where the leftist front in the recent parliamentary elections included industrial democracy, impelling President Pompidou to promise to "limit assembly lines and to humanize working conditions," with legislation said to be in preparation. In Britain, the Labor Party chief, Harold Wilson, recently called for a "living democracy in industry."

In many European countries, the idea of industrial democracy is so thoroughly accepted as a practical and attainable goal that it is almost impossible to find any one who does not favor the basic principle. A 12-year-old boy, questioned by a newspaper in Sweden making an inquiry into teen-age vocational plans stated: "A bad job is where others make all the decisions and you have to do what they say." (*New York Times*, 13 May, 1973, Section 3:1, 4.)

ONE COUNTRY'S SEARCH FOR A CURE FOR MONKEY WRENCH BLUES — Plans for a new Volvo factory in Kalmar in Sweden, include teams of 15 to 25 workers in various stations: each team will be responsible for completing an entire assembly task. Thus one group may deal only with the electrical system, another with steering and controls and another with interior trim and upholstery.

To encourage a feeling of group identity, each production team will have its own entrance to the plant, its own changing rooms, its own rest and recreation area. "Man is the most important thing in our new plant," says Karl-Göran Maniette, a member of the planning group for the new plant. "We are going back to the small workshop concept."

Despite the nagging doubts and imperfections, many social scientists and management theorists both in the United States and in Europe pose an overriding question: Can we afford *not* to undertake these experiments — try radical departures from standard industrial practices — in spite of what they will cost? The feeling is that a modern society will have to pay the price of the Blue Collar Blues one way or another. (Article by Charles N. Barnard in *Signature*, June, 1973:37.)

Notices of these trends have not been confined to the New York publications. They have also appeared in: *Christian Science Monitor,* Boston, Mass. 21 July, 1972; *Post*, 24 January, 1972; Biloxi, Miss. *Herald*, 15 February, 1972; Houston, Texas *Chronicle*, 28 December, 1971; San Antonio, Texas, *News*, 30 December, 1971; Kanasa City, Mo. *Star*, 4 January, 1972; Cleveland, Ohio *Plain Dealer*, 7 January, 1972; Hutchinson, Kansas *News*, 6 January, 1972; Cape Girardeau, Mo. *S.E. Missourian*, 11 January, 1972; among a few.

An excellent series of articles by Allen Lundbert titled "What do you mean, 'job environment'?" appears in *Sweden Now*, December, 1971, vol. 5, no. 12:16 ff.

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Living Legal Customs of the Common People of Europe

ERNŐ TÁRKÁNY-SZÜCS

At the turn of the century prominent jurists dealing with legislation were convinced that in the twentieth century acts and decrees, i.e. internal state law, would become a coherent unity covering all aspects of life and offering rules for every requirement. At the time, this conception seemed to be supported by two circumstances. One was the slowing down of the rate of development of customary law owing to a decrease in the number and intensity of legal customs; the other was an increase in the role of written law. However, subsequent events have shown that the importance of these circumstances had been overestimated.

The history of law can quite clearly be traced. In the oldest human societies the (authoritative) role of law was borne by custom. It was custom that acted as a central regulator of the interaction of rights and duties, of society and the individual. It is highly improbable that at this level of development a significant theoretical difference could be made within the structure of custom, for example, between customs surrounding dress and customs requiring restraint. People observed customs as a matter of conviction; the possibility of living in any other way did not even occur to them.

The exclusive dominance of custom was challenged by the appearance of the state. From then on the most important rules of human relations were enshrined in written law, reflecting the will of the state and its rulers. Thus, in addition to custom a new form of influencing human behavior had come into being: written law enforceable by the power of the state. During the long period of feudalism in Europe, almost up to the sixteenth century, written law and custom were sources of equal value for law so that custom could interfere with written law and vice versa. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries written law became predominant in every field in spite of a significant tendency within the philosophy of law,

the so-called German historical-legal school, which considered custom based on the law-creating *Volksgeist* to be equivalent to written law.

At the turn of the century written law became almost exclusively the source of law. Parallel with the speeding up of technical development, extensive codes with several thousand items and huge collections of decrees came to be at the disposal of people in nearly every country of Europe, and they formed an apparently closed inner system of law that could not be contravened by custom. Since World War II attempts have been made to unify systems of law, cultural and technical grounds becoming nearly identical.

To meet the requirements of the situation, citizens, before conducting family, economic, and commercial transactions, have to consult official codes so as to be able to do what is prescribed. It is widely supposed even today that the legal education of the people will approximate that of the professional jurists and that is how general legal consciousness will reach the level of codes. For that reason, during the past seventy years, customary law, that is custom in the area of social authority, has come to be driven out of positions developed through thousands of years.

This has been the endeavor of many jurists from the turn of the century to the present. Now, in the seventies of this century, on the basis of empirical data at our disposal, let us attempt to give a short synopsis of the extent to which this dream of the jurist has been realized.

It must be said in advance that from the very rich European literature we will make only a limited selection. The history of research in this area was outlined in my earlier study on legal ethnology in Europe (1967). There, in addition to summarizing the history of the science, I pointed out that living legal customs in Europe can be traced back to the time of long-outdated social-historical forms, such as primitive communities and feudalism.

In this paper I should like to recall a few of these living legal customs. One is the custom of *occupation* or *occupation marks*, which can be traced back thousands of years. It is a primitive method for the acquisition of property, often of a previously unclaimed, masterless thing. Primitive man, being a gatherer, put a mark on the hive of wild bees in the same way as a Polish peasant does today when he finds one in a forest, even though the forest may be someone else's property. The mark secured him title to the honey and nobody dared to question it. Fishermen of nearly every people of Europe put such marks on their fish baskets and fishing equipment.

There are still many old legal customs connected with common labor. Among harvesters, for example, who are seasonal workers, the division of labor and the sharing of profit follow strict principles, which, in case of dispute, are recognized by state courts. The situation is similar with joint enterprises. For example, the Norwegians consider the way in which each

individual has participated in their whale hunts when deciding how to divide up the different parts of the catch. Communal work, brought about identical rules in practically every nation. The living customary law of the Lapps has also preserved many such traditions.

Different latent traditions of former tribal and clan organization survive in the customs of many people in isolated villages in the Balkans, especially in Albania which is perhaps the richest country in Europe in that respect. Old tribal canons in the highlands, especially in High Kutor limit to the clan the group from which the individual may choose a mate; they allow trial marriage; and in practice they restrict the rights of women. Around Durres, as late as 1959, polygamy was very frequent among Mohammedan peasants because the value of women was determined by their labor-power: if he had two or three wives a husband could get on well without doing very much work himself.

Special attention should be given to the institution of vendetta in Albania and Corsica, it contains traditional elements but is frequently carried out by up-to-date means. Even today many people live in fear because of it. Eight to ten murders originating in vendettas are reported yearly in the vicinity of large towns in Albania and Corsica. Village law demands revenge, and those who do not observe the custom are expelled; very often he who seeks revenge will pursue his man anywhere in the world.

Some years ago the story of a teacher named Cafo produced a sensation in Yugoslavia. A family who were at daggers drawn with him got him out of the village on a pretext and attacked him, trying to kill him. But it was he who eventually killed his two attackers, for which he was sentenced to fifteen years imprisonment. Once in prison, he himself was safe but, fifteen male members of his family, from grandfather to grandson, were well aware that they might be shot dead at any time by the brothers of the men who had been killed by Cafo. They fenced their house with tall boards, covering the openings with canvas, to prevent anyone from even looking into their yard. No stranger was allowed inside; children were not taken to the doctor; and only the women who are not subject to revenge, dared to go to the fields. One of the brothers of the victims was known to be preparing for revenge; otherwise the whole village would have expelled him!

In connection with marriage there are various customs among the different peoples of Europe. Such, for example, is the dowry (*Morgengabe*) which is promised by the husband to his wife if the marriage is contracted and consummated. It is sometimes specified in a contract; in some places it is customary only in the case of a second marriage. It also happens that the partners mutually fix a dowry for each other. It may be given if there is no child of the marriage or if the wife or the husband dies. Many customs have been recorded in connection with the wedding dower

which is brought to the marriage by the woman. There have been debates, in the Hungarian courts, for example, about the wedding dower, that is about the disposition of chattels that were given by one of the couple or by relatives or acquaintances to the other as a symbol of engagement or on the occasion of the marriage. The problem is whether the dower should be regarded as separate or common property; generally local custom determines what action will be taken in these cases.

Apparently the joint family as a community of goods and labor has survived in many places in the Balkans, central Europe, Switzerland, Spain (near the Pyrenees), and in western parts of Norway, in spite of the economic changes. The joint family combining three of four generations of ascendants and descendants into working communities under the leadership of the male head of the family generally lived in a common house, shared property, and carried out work on the basis of strict rules as to division of labor. Part of the profit was used for general improvement and part was divided among the individual families according to customary law. Quite often, the individual families could acquire private property for themselves.

Rich material on customary law has been collected from nearly every people of Europe in connection with communal cattle breeding. These communities came into being through the joining together of smallholders to hire pasture, to take on herdsmen, and to buy equipment and instruments for transporting cattle and processing milk. The smallholders divided the costs and the milk and cheese — the latter generally every day — in proportion to their ownership of the transhumed cattle. In the Swiss Alps the unit for the usage of the pasture is the so-called cow right, which virtually means private property; it is a right that can be inherited, sold, or transferred. There are unusual rules in connection with communal pasture in Irish villages. In Rumania milk farms are newly formed each year, and the result of the first milking in spring determines the amount of cheese each smallholder gets during the year.

Customs of inheritance also vary considerably, though the basic principle of inheritance *by law* is that they be consistent. Two legal customs can still be observed among the peasants. According to one of these, a particular son of the family is secured a privileged position at the expense of the others. This is either the oldest or the youngest boy (the former among the Germans and the latter among the Hungarians). This custom can still be found in the Pyrenees, in Corsica and among many central European peoples. The other dominant custom is the infringement of girls' rights of inheritance; they get only an endowment. This is justified by the fact that they leave their homes and thus do not play any role in the further increase of the family property. *He who is away from the family, either because of the learning or the practice of a trade, receives less everywhere because it is said that "he who is away is no brother"* (see

Diamond 1967). The means of this curtailment is the last will or in the case of chattels the immediate transfer to the privileged child.

Compared to the rapid changes in trade, the development of civil law is slow in many countries, and this can lead to the formation and observance of legal customs. This is possible because of the principle of freedom to contract; thus the parties can include in commercial contracts conditions that are favorable to them. These become rules, substituting for law, relating to commercial partners in the case of land and water transport, and contracts of agents and representatives.

In developed capitalist countries such as France, chambers of commerce generally collect these conventional rules as well as so-called usages, which are quite often applied in the local interpretation of contracts. Naturally customs are also observed in national commerce, but these customs can become the source of law only in countries where internal law recognizes custom as a formal source of law.

On the basis of the rich sources of literature we could go on with the review relevant to European peoples. All this should convince us that the prediction of jurists at the beginning of the century has not come true because legal customs survive in every European nation in range and intensity determined by the inner relations of life. Naturally their role is much less significant than it was in the past, or they might still be clearly visible, as they are still in less developed countries.

If the source of these legal customs that influence human behavior is examined, highly interesting results come to light. First of all, the survival of historical traditions can be noticed within identical groups from one generation to the other, and in the takeover of the custom of some higher class by a lower one (*gesunkenes Kulturgut*).

Even in quite recent times there have been legal customs dating back to earlier social-historical periods among the nations of Europe. The memory of gathering is preserved in occupation marks and legal customs connected with them, the living traces of which have been revealed by E. A. Virtanen (1961) among Finno-Ugric peoples. In the region of Vrancea, the Rumanians have a form of legal magic, called *sanger*. This consists of a bloody stake being placed in each of the four corners of a field. In H. H. Stahl's opinion (1938), this is to protect the field from strangers. K. Ostberg (1914–1936) describes old Norwegian fishing customs: the distribution of the various parts of the whale's carcass and the customs derived from this which had their origins thousands of years ago. Or, observe Albania, where survivals of customs based on the internal functions of the ancient clan organization still exist in family life today. In view of these customs, we can scarcely consider ourselves independent of the prefeudal age. In the case of the migrant gypsies and some transhumant shepherds in the Balkans, it is as if the wheel of time had stopped several centuries ago.

Remains of early and late feudalism are still to be found in the material of European legal ethnology. These are chiefly connected with the soil — its use, concept, and heritage — and the family. It would be rather difficult to associate the joint family or house-community (*zadruga*) with any single given historical age, but the seed of its diverse forms, as can be studied from the end of the nineteenth century to the present, was sown by feudalism. Various elements of feudalism are embodied in the internal organization of the village, the countless economic, cultural, and social institutions (for example, law courts, common pasture for animals, common defense against fire) which were brought into being for the purpose of carrying out common tasks. These were examined chiefly by German and Swiss scholars. From the age of capitalism commercial customs (market practices, usances, etc.) were embraced by legal ethnology. In this respect we cannot as yet form any idea of the relation of socialism to legal ethnology, but it would appear that the internal collaboration of the state organs has a tendency to follow stereotyped practices (as customs), while trade follows the usual commercial customs.

Thus, we draw the conclusion that no people exists which does not possess legal customs. There are still many possibilities for research work on legal ethnology in Europe, whatever type of ruling system governs.

Besides historical traditions it is the underdevelopment of codification, i.e. law put down in books, that allows the survival of legal customs. The separation and isolation of the provision of law and the living law appearing in legal practice are the most specific problems of legal sociology, the investigation of which has been attempted in every country. For instance, since 1935 attention has been paid even in the Soviet Union to the legal aspect of social phenomena; thus they examine how law becomes realized, too. In the new social structure the comparison between the legal culture of the common people and rules as legal requirements was important for the Soviet state because there were nationalities at different cultural levels in her territory. The customary law of certain Caucasian peoples, for example, continued to recognize practices such as polygamy and family revenge for quite a long time. Because of this there were places where conflict between law and custom frequently occurred.

In some areas the dominance of local customs over law must be recognized even by judicial practice. For example, the Hungarian Supreme Court, when having to decide the question of whether the gift given to the young couple by the relatives on the day of the wedding is the property of the husband or the wife, relied on dominant local custom. This was not the same in every part of the country; in some areas the gift given by the man's family belonged to the man and that given by the woman's family belonged to the woman; in other areas everything was held in common, and in still others the settlement that everything should become the property of the wife was regarded as being just.

In France, according to R. Maunier, village custom is recognized as a substitute for law or as a usage that interprets or sheds light upon it, but if there is no law it is given an auxiliary role. Maunier remarked wittily that without legal customs "the right of the judges would have no foundation" (1938). This remark might be regarded as valid for practically every European law.

It is not only the language, costume, decorative arts, and folklore of the peoples of Europe that are varied, colorful, rich, and delightful but also their legal customs or the rules that influence legal consciousness and behavior within the smaller communities. The scientific mapping of these legal customs has been started in nearly every European country.

This vast work needs the cooperation of people dealing with legal folklore, historians of law, and sociologists of law.

In the literature we find several ways of designating this research, according to its relationship to other sciences. In France, today, both ethnological and sociological investigators generally use the expression *ethnologie juridique* rather than the obsolete *folklore juridique*. The Italians use several names: *folclore giuridico, folcloristica giuridica,* and *étnologia giuridica* (chiefly used by jurists). In accordance with their historical interest, some Germans call it *rechtsgeschichtliche volkskunde* or *rechtsarchäologie*; others use A. H. Post's expression *ethnographische jurisprudenz*; still others J. Kohler's term *ethnologische rechtsforschung*. But the term *rechtliche volkskunde* is becoming more and more current in the ethnologists' terminology. The Dutch use *juridisch folklore*; Lettish researchers *juridiska folklora*; the Poles *etnografia prawna*; the Czechs *právni ethnografie* and *právni lidoveda*. In Hungary they generally use *jogi néprajz* [legal ethnology], *jogi népszokáskutatás* [research into legal folk customs], *népi jogkutatás* [folk legal research], *népi jogéletkutatás* [research into the legal life of the people]. In Sweden and in England we find the term "legal anthropology."

Certain European researchers deal with legal ethnology, and all activities which come under that name as a branch of ethnology; others look upon it as an auxiliary science to the history of law; and again there are researchers who consider it part of comparative jurisprudence or sociology.

Concerning the results, we must mention that steps have already been taken toward a common cultivation of legal ethnology. Among them, we can consider the decision of the Académie Internationale de Droit Comparé (in 1932 at its congress at the Hague) to take upon itself the task of studying not only the written and unwritten legal customs of primitive peoples, but also the folk legal customs and legal folklore of the whole of Europe. To further this aim, the Czechoslovak R. Horma, proposed in 1952 that a congress of Polish, Czech, and Slovak jurists should be set up. In 1964, at the VIIth International Congress of Anthropological and

Ethnological Sciences in Moscow, customary law appeared as the central theme for the common study of the source of legislation.

This vast work needs the cooperation of historians of law and sociologists of law and of people dealing with legal folklore.

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PART FOUR

African Perspectives

Urban Ethnology in Africa: Some Theoretical Issues

AMELIA MARIOTTI and BERNARD MAGUBANE

> Colonization and Civilization?
> In dealing with this subject, the commonest curse is to be the dupe in good faith of a collective hypocrisy that cleverly misrepresents problems, the better to legitimize the hateful solutions provided for them.
>
> In other words, the essential thing here is to see clearly, to think clearly — that is, dangerously — and to answer clearly the innocent first question: what, fundamentally, is colonization? To agree on what it is not: neither evangelization, nor a philanthropic enterprise, nor a desire to push back the frontiers of ignorance, disease, and tyranny, nor a project undertaken for the greater glory of God, nor an attempt to extend the rule of law. To admit once and for all, without flinching at the consequences, that the decisive actors here are the adventurer and the pirate, the wholesale grocer and the ship owner, the gold digger and the merchant, appetite and force, and behind them, the baleful projected shadow of a form of civilization which, at a certain point in its history, finds itself obliged, for internal reasons, to extend to a world scale the competition of its antagonistic economies.
>
> AIMÉ CÉSAIRE, *Discourse on colonialism*

> *This is a critical time for the social sciences, not a time for courtesies.*
> ROBERT LYND

Tawney remarks in one of his books (1948) that in ordinary times intellectual tameness with practical energy is sufficiently serviceable to explain, if not justify, the equanimity of those who have made their bargain with fate and are content to take what it offers without reopening the deal. It leaves the mind free to concentrate undisturbed upon profitable activities, because it is not distracted by a taste for unprofitable speculation. Tawney goes on to say that most generations walk in a path

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which they neither make, nor discover, but accept; the main thing is that they should march.

The blinkers, again to summarize Tawney, worn by social scientists enable them to trot steadily along the beaten road without being disturbed by curiosity about their destination. There are times which are not ordinary, and in such times it is not enough to follow the beaten road. It is necessary to know where it leads, and if it leads nowhere, to follow another. The search for another involves reflection, which is uncongenial to bustling people who describe themselves as practical, because they take things as they are and leave them as they are.

One must recognize with Barrington Moore, Jr. (1965:5) that in certain respects the tasks of the applied and the theoretical sciences are mutually contradictory. The applied scientist seeks to create an accurate map of a small portion of reality. If he is an engineer building a bridge, he wants to know all about the qualities of certain types of steel, the behavior of currents near the banks of the river, the possibility of high winds, and so forth. The social scientist who wishes to explain and ultimately predict the behavior of a particular social group will also want to learn a great deal about the specific economic, political, and other forces that impinge upon the behavior of this group as well as the organizational features of the group, its capacity to resist certain types of strains, and similar matters. He is not necessarily concerned with mining facts for or against some hypothesis. On the other hand, while the theorist endeavors to eliminate as many "perturbations" and "irrelevant" factors and forces as possible in order to reach the highest level of abstraction, he must not ignore the concrete historical reality. The social scientist who wishes to construct a logically integrated theory of urban life must deliberately and explicitly exclude from consideration many aspects of human activity in the city that are not relevant to explaining urban phenomena.

URBANIZATION AND THE MODERN ERA

> The concrete is concrete because it is a combination of many determinations, i.e., a unity of diverse elements.
>
> KARL MARX, *Die Grundrisse*

Max Weber (1958:66) and Arnold Toynbee (1970:8) define the city as a settlement, the inhabitants of which engage primarily in nonagricultural productive activities. Such a definition is of some value in that it identifies certain general features that may be found wherever cities exist. Placed in a historical context, however, these features assume a complexity that cannot be explained by means of a rational abstraction. For a city is not an entity that can be analyzed apart from its historical and social context, but rather a historical configuration which reflects the particular class rela-

tions that prevail in a particular historical epoch. The welter of competing definitions and special theories which fill the literature on cities reflects the attempt to treat the city as a static, suprahistorical entity — to elevate various concrete, historical features to abstract universal principles.

In contrast to this is Marx's view (1969:52) that a city is a set of social relations in which the social processes of a class society become focused under particular historical conditions:

> The existence of the town implies . . . the necessity of administration, police, taxes, etc., in short, of the municipality, and thus of politics in general. Here first became manifest the division of the population into two great classes, which is directly based on the division of labour and on the instruments of production. The town already is in actual fact the concentration of the population, of the instruments of production, of capital, of pleasures, of needs, while the country demonstrates just the opposite fact, isolation and separation. The antagonism between town and country can only exist within the framework of private property. It is the most crass expression of the subjection of the individual under the division of labour, under a definite activity forced upon him — a subjection which makes one man into a restricted town-animal, the other into a restricted country-animal, and daily creates anew the conflict between their interests. Labour is here again the chief thing, power *over* individuals, and as long as the latter exists, private property must exist.

Superficially, the urbanization that has occurred during different historical epochs may look identical. It is this superficial identity to which abstract definitions point. However, this identity obtains only on the level of description. Any attempt at explanation must specify the process which generates the observed facts contained in definitions and descriptions.

Cities first arise with the emergence of class society (Adams 1966:197) and subsequently develop and wane with the evolution of productive forces and concomitant reorganizations of class relations and shifts in social power. The establishment of capitalism as the dominant mode of production brings a transfer of productive forces and social power to the towns. With the advent of capitalism, urbanization becomes a worldwide phenomenon reflecting the social change that is induced by economic restructuring. As the focus of productive life under industrial capitalism, the city involves the settlement of large numbers of people in industrial centers. Laborers are drawn or pressed into these centers by job opportunities created by expanding manufacturing and commercial activities. In this way the process of urbanization is set in motion by those classes that control the forces of industrialization.

The class structure of society and the interests of the ruling class are crucial determinants of the manifestations of urbanization. The control of the means of production gives capitalists superior power that they wield over the urban workers who have been divorced from any independent means of production of their own. Professor Thompson discusses the

development of this relationship in Europe (1959 [1928]:792–793):

> Everywhere the wealthy classes controlled the local town government and local trade and industry, and passed statutes in support of their interests, like privileges and monopolies, or expressive of their contempt for the masses. Thus, in Bruges in 1241 the law associated counterfeiters, thieves and artisans together. Strikes and riots in densely populated industrial regions of Europe, as Lombardy, Tuscany, and Flanders, are common from the middle of the thirteenth century onward. . . . This state of things led to a new form of association — namely leagues of the great guildsmen in all the cities of a province or region — and to attempts on the part of the working classes to form unions in their own midst and even to knit together such combinations in adjacent towns. But all such efforts were abortive in the Middle Ages, except in Florence, and then only successful for a short season.

In societies in which an indigenous capitalist class develops, the surplus derived from earlier exploitation is invested to produce further growth. Industrialization proceeds continuously, and urbanization can be contained, more or less, by the widening economic framework. But in societies in which the capitalist mode of production is introduced and controlled by an alien bourgeoisie and develops without connection with the requirements of these societies, this process is distorted. Oskar Lange (1963:11–12) suggests:

> Investment in underdeveloped countries of capital from the highly developed countries acquired a specific character. It went chiefly into the exploitation of natural resources to be utilized as raw materials by the industries of the developed countries and into developing food production to feed the population of the developed capitalist countries. . . .
>
> In consequence, the economics of the underdeveloped countries became onesided, raw material and food-exporting economies. The profits which were made by foreign capital in these countries were [not used] for reinvestment in these countries where the capital came from. . . . This is the essential reason why the underdeveloped countries were not capable of following the classical capitalist path of economic development.

In short, then, the process of urbanization under capitalism has a historically specific dynamic. Needless to say, this implies that industrial capitalism must be understood not as a static condition but as a developing, expanding process. That is, urbanization that occurs under imperialist expansion possesses a dynamic which by no means replicates that of the autochthonous process of Western Europe (*contra* Lerner [1967:22] and Little [1971:3]), but reflects a negative dialectic of imperialism.

The widespread occurrence (both in time and place) of the urban phenomenon should not be allowed to obscure its particular manifestations. An examination of urbanization must be within definite historical limits. Also, the concrete peculiarities of the circumstances in which

urbanization occurs must be taken into account. Failing to do this, social scientists undertake the fruitless task of establishing universal, abstract laws of the urban process. The search for laws which may explain all cities betrays the misconception that urbanization is an independent process in history. Isolated from other social processes, the development and decline of cities appears to be a fortuitous occurrence or a function of such factors as geographic location, population growth and dispersal, or terrain. Attempts to account for the emergence of a city in these terms become exercises in the description and correlation of traits. Trivialities assume a significance equal to necessities; cause, consequence, and coincidence become confused; and underlying social processes remain hidden by the elaboration of appearances.

An adequate explanation of urbanization must be based on an investigation of this process in its historical context. Historical specificity does not, however, necessitate an eclectic method of investigation. It is possible to approach all urban situations by means of a common methodology and yet arrive at formulations which are historically specific and precise (Driscoll:1972). Marx regarded abstraction as a correct method of inquiry. This method, according to Sweezy (1942:11–12), involves successive approximations. That is, while retaining the fundamental characteristic of a context (e.g., urbanization), it allows the superficial characteristics to drop out. When moving from a high level of generalization to the concrete, Marx in his studies of the evolution of capitalism removed simplifying assumptions and undertook an analysis of the historical situation in its full complexity. Instead of employing general categories to embrace a changing content, the Marxist method requires that generalizations "always have a specific historical element" (Korsch 1963:43). Insofar as the essence and appearance of phenomena are not identical, it is the task of the social scientist to discover the essence beneath its outward appearance. Because bourgeois anthropologists who study urbanization in the so-called developing countries do not understand the method of scientific abstraction, they confuse appearances with essence in their comparative study of urban phenomena in the developing and developed countries. The study of the industrial city and its emergence everywhere must understand the dynamics of the political economy of imperialism. In its classical sense, political economy is the study of economics as shaped by political class struggle.

THE CITY IN MODERN AFRICA

> The revival of trade, after the crisis of 1847, was the dawn of a new industrial epoch. the repeal of the Corn Laws and the financial reforms subsequent thereon gave to English industry and commerce all the elbow-room they had asked for. The discovery of the Califor-

> nian and Australian gold-fields followed in rapid succession. The colonial markets developed at an increasing rate their capacity for absorbing English manufactured goods. In India millions of hand-weavers were finally crushed out by the Lancashire power loom. China was more and more being opened up. . . . This world-market, at first was composed of a number of chiefly or entirely agricultural countries grouped around one manufacturing centre — England — which consumed the greater part of this surplus raw produce, and supplied them in return with the greater part of their requirements in manufactured articles. No wonder England's industrial progress was colossal and unparalleled. . . . And in proportion as this increase took place, in the same proportion did manufacturing industry become apparently moralised.
>
> FREDERICK ENGELS, *The condition of the working class in England*

Urbanization in Africa is a subject of interest to many urban theorists (see Hauser 1965; Reissman 1964; Fava 1968). Some look to urbanization in the developing countries for a recapitulation of the European experience. For instance, Reissman (1964:153) says that urbanization in Africa provides a "rare opportunity to study . . . cases of historical reiteration." Hauser (1965:34) expresses the hope that studies of Africa and Asia may "shed light on the antecedents and consequences of urbanization in the West." When differences in the urbanization of nineteenth-century Europe and that of colonial Africa are observed, there is little attempt to explain them. Rather, the African experience is characterized as a deviation from the Western model (see Lerner 1967).

Other theorists concern themselves with problems of definition and categorization. The literature abounds with typologies of cities based on origin, location, function, and so on (see Weber 1958; Simms 1965:5–8). Various indices have been developed to study the optimum location, size, density, and composition of population; the attributes of the city as a physical "container"; the quality of social life and the characteristic mentality of urban dwellers (Driscoll 1972). For the most part, such criteria are only descriptive of the empirical reality, yielding little in the way of explanation.

An elaboration of indices is a common approach in urban studies; it is a method that takes the city as a given entity and tries to isolate those properties which seem to be common or unique to urban situations or to various urban populations. If well conceived, the search for what is distinctively urban may yield useful insights about the ways in which the city differs from rural life or in which the class structure of the city affects different populations differently. It cannot, however, explain why urban life is the way it is. This approach can provide at best a familiarity with the superficial aspects of urban phenomena. At worst, its resulting configurations are tautological and distorted, as when it is argued that with urbanization has come "increased freedom for women, changes in reproductive behavior, and late marriages," and these indices are then taken as "a few

of the factors which have brought about direct changes within the indigenous family structure" (Simms 1965:25).

Attempts at generalizations reflect the confusion that exists regarding the nature of urbanization in Africa. One source of error is ideologically prejudiced formulations. Terms such as *detribalization, stabilization,* and *Westernization* have been used to refer to the process of urbanization in Africa. Living in towns is described as "civilized," in contrast to living in rural areas, which is "uncivilized" (Pons 1969; Epstein 1967; Mitchell 1956a). Another source of error is the attempt to explain urbanization only in terms of the behavior of Africans in cities. This leads to considerable discussion concerning objective criteria for describing an "urbanized African." These include a number of years of permanent residence in a city, permanent residence of wife in an urban area, and absence of land rights in the countryside (Hellman 1953; Mitchell 1956b).

Students of urbanization in Africa give particular attention to Africans who live and work in cities but retain land rights in rural areas. Descriptions of African town dwellers who supplement their wages with agricultural production are a basis for superficial analyses of "dual" or "plural" society in urban and development literature. Attempts to explain the retention of rural landholdings or extended kin ties, the instability of urban residence or other features of urbanization in Africa, pass over the objective structure of colonial society to focus on the "backward" attitudes of Africans or the tenacity of the traditional way of life. Low wages, the confiscation of unworked land, and the tenuousness of urban work and residence under labor contracts, work compounds, and the color bar are less significant in these analyses than are conjectured reasons for the rural-urban shuttling or people's perception and evaluation of that aspect of the colonial system which they directly experience.

There is a general failure to recognize that the behavior and attitudes of Africans are not the cause of the kind of urbanization that Africa has experienced but rather the observable effect of social forces which initiated and shaped the process of urbanization itself. These social forces were not generated by traditional African social structures but by the development and expansion of the capitalist mode of production. In reality, the city in Africa is a clear expression of the nature of underdevelopment: namely, the deprivation of African countries of resources and the cumulative effects which would have resulted if the raw material of these countries had been processed and manufactured locally.

The nature of urbanization in Africa requires that the relationship between Africa and certain European countries be sought out and examined. In doing so, it becomes apparent that much of what has been taken to be uniquely African is a consequence of this relationship.

The attempt to study urbanization at a continental level is a risky undertaking indeed. These general observations will not be entirely

adequate for any particular region or country. However, they do apply at a general level where the process and conditions in their continental manifestations can be examined without denying regional variations. Within this perspective the differential impact of colonialism on particular societies can be accounted for with further specification.[1]

Historically, it was the industrial revolution which occurred within the developing capitalist relations of production that allowed the more or less peaceful growth of towns as centers of the capitalist productive system in Europe. Once the basis of industrialization and urbanization had been created there, the capitalist productive forces began a steady expansion overseas. This extension was not merely to discover but to create "new worlds" through the exploitation of raw materials needed for the developing capitalist industries. The "modernizing" force of European contact did not recreate the newly established European social order in Africa. Rather it set Africa on a course of underdevelopment as an aspect of the further capitalist development of Western Europe and later the United States.

The violent penetration and rupture of precapitalist societies and the subjugation of the economic life of the greater part of the world to the profit impulse of the Western bourgeoisie constitute the fundamental reality of the colonial city in Africa. In contrast to European cities, which were an organic part of the economic growth of their respective countries, the town in Africa is a symbol of the social fractures and estrangement founded upon a multidimensional polarization (economic, political, cultural) of colonizer and colonized (see Murray and Wengraf 1963:29). Administrative, market, and industrial requirements of European countries, and not indigenous development, gave rise to most urban areas in Africa.

Three interrelated trends can be identified in an indigenous process of urbanization, These are changes in the composition of the population, changes in the distribution of skills, and changes in the relation between town and country. At particular times and in various societies these trends stand in differential relation to one another. The tragic but determining fact for African societies is that the industrial development that forms the economic basis of the towns and cities was — and to a large extent still is — foreign.[2]

[1] Many of the illustrations in this discussion are drawn from South Africa. Although the colonial experience in South Africa is marked by certain peculiarities, it is by no means unique. The general condition of imperialist expansion and domination under which urbanization took place in South Africa prevailed for the entire continent. An adequate explanation of urbanization in any particular area comes not from seeking out peculiarities of the African societies or the "national character" of the colonizers, but from examining the relation between colonizer and colonized and the process from which this relation emerged.

[2] Once generated, the dynamic of underdevelopment continues even after the departure of the last colonial administrator as long as the relations between capital and labor remain unchanged. With the worldwide dismantling of the colonial order, "only in countries where capitalism was abolished was imperialist domination destroyed root and branch" (Mandel 1969:480).

This development is reflected in the class structure of the colonial city, in which transplanted, alien managerial class prevails, whose interest in the development of African resources — both human and natural — is limited to the requirements of the extraction of immediate superprofits. The colonial situation also fosters the development of a tiny, indigenous petty bourgeoisie comprising comprador and low-echelon bureaucratic elements. This class remains dependent upon foreign exploitation for its existence even after the dismantling of the formal empire. It has no independent role in the development (or rather underdevelopment) of its country. Removed from the process of capital accumulation by the export of capital to the metropolis, this class turns to the conspicuous consumption of foreign commodities (see Nwosu 1973:48). The consequences of imperialist penetration are most evident in the underdeveloped proletariat, whose existence was demanded and whose character continues to be determined by the requirements of foreign capital. Thus, the development of technology and skills is not related to the material needs of African social life. African economies operate within a system which was organized to extract raw materials for foreign industries. City growth, including the aberrant relationship with the countryside, expressed the illogic and imbalance of the colonial system as a whole (see Murray and Wengraf 1963:19). The failure of colonialism to complete the task of social transformation it had begun, indeed the pauperizing dynamic of the colonial system, produced the most profoundly distorted and skewed societies. Comparing the European and African experience, Basil Davidson (1974:277) points out that:

> The first [industrialization] destroyed, but also, after its fashion, mightily rebuilt afresh; the second, having gone far to ruin what it found, could only leave for Africans the task of making a new society. No such new society came into being during the colonial period. Little was left behind but an utter impoverishment of the old society, a chaos of ideas and social relationships. . . . When the principal colonializing powers eventually withdrew, everything of basic social meaning remained to be begun or rebuilt afresh.

Thus, urbanization in Africa was accompanied by a complex process of dislocations and contradictions that was not a recapitulation of the earlier experience in the development of European capitalism, but the articulation of its final contradictions. The social and historical significance of urban dynamics in Africa can be adequately comprehended and appraised only if African cities are studied as aspects of the political and economic systems of the colonizing countries. The structure of the city in Africa reflects a situation in which the economies of African societies were conditioned by the development and needs of the European economies to which they were subjected as producers and processors of raw materials. As Dos Santos (1971:226) explains:

The relation of interdependence between two or more economies and between these and world trade, assumes the form of dependence when some countries (the dominant ones) can expand and can be self-starting while other countries (the dependent ones) can do this only as a reflection of that expansion which can have either a positive or negative effect on their immediate development.

The concept of dependence facilitates an examination of the internal situation of African cities as the result not of factors characteristic of traditional African societies but of the exigencies of colonialism. In order to explain the social structures that developed in the African city, the requirements and consequences of capitalism in its imperialist development must be understood.

COMPARATIVE URBANIZATION AND INDUSTRIALIZATION

> Sixty, eighty years ago England was a country like any other, with small towns, few and simple industries, and a thin but proportionally large agricultural population. Today it is a country like no other, with a capital of two and half million inhabitants; with vast manufacturing cities, with an industry that supplies the world and produces almost everything by means of the most complex machinery; with an industrious, intelligent, dense population, of which two thirds are employed in trade and commerce, and composed of classes wholly different: forming, in fact, with other customs and other needs, a different nation from the England of those days. The industrial revolution is of the same importance for England as the political revolution for France and the philosophical revolution for Germany.
> FREDERICK ENGELS, *The condition of the working class in England*

The comparative study of urbanization raises the questions regarding the relationship between urbanization and industrialization (Breese 1966; Lerner 1967). The concurrence of these two processes in the development of Western Europe, in particular England, and of the United States contrasts sharply with the urbanization without industrialization that has occurred in Africa (Barber 1967) and elsewhere (Hauser 1965; Myrdal 1968;Ward 1969). The problems of African urban life are conceived to be what Daniel Lerner (1967:25) calls the "decoupling" of the twin processes. The solution frequently posed is the promotion of industrialization and the delaying of urbanization in order to return the two processes to harmonious relations (Ward 1969). The implementation of such a mechanical proposal usually takes the form of population-control programs and "foreign aid" which, according to Mandel (1969: 472–481), do not aid the industrial development of the recipient, but facilitate the transfer of social surplus to the donor.

Those who try to draw parallels between European and African urbanization and industrialization fail to recognize that these processes are

aspects of the development of the capitalist mode of production at one point in history for Europe and at another point in history for Africa. Failing to recognize this, social scientists are frequently at a loss to account for the combination of burgeoning urban centers and limping industrial development in Africa. One need only examine the relation between Europe and the United States, on the one hand, and between Europe and Africa, on the other, to discover why advanced industrial development has taken place in the United States while the basis of industrialization has never been firmly established in Africa. As Singer (1950:338–339) explains:

> The productive facilities for export from underdeveloped countries, which were so largely a result of foreign investment, never became a part of the internal economic structure of those underdeveloped countries themselves except in the purely geographical and physical sense. Economically speaking, they were really an outpost of the economies of more developed investing countries. The main secondary multiplier effects, which the textbooks tell us to expect from investments, took place not where the investment was physically or geographically located but (to the extent that the results of these investments returned directly home) where the investment came from. I would suggest that if the proper economic test of investment is the multiplier effect in the form of cumulative additions to income, employment, capital, technical knowledge, and growth of external economies, then a good deal of the investment in underdeveloped countries which we used to consider as "foreign" should in fact be considered as domestic investment on the part of the industrialized countries.

Africa does not suffer from a mysterious decoupling of urbanization and industrialization but rather from imperialist penetration which creates forced shanty urbanization in the colonies and industrial development in the metropolitan countries. The exaggerated influx of masses of people from rural areas into urban centers was precipitated by indiscriminate policies designed to create a surplus labor force as quickly as possible without regard for future consequences. Towns sprang up in mining regions from which raw materials were extracted and shipped to the metropolitan country without material benefit accruing to those towns. The raw materials contributed to industrial development and economic growth in Europe, not Africa. As Murray and Wengraf (1963:19) note:

> The leading towns [in Africa] were not the creation of industrialization and inherent technical progress, but were rather the product of an export-directed colonial agriculture [and mining], whose rents and profits found an urban outlet in consumption and speculations.

Furthermore, colonial economies were not allowed to develop those sectors which would generate growth and support cumulative industrialization. In fact, there were few ties between one sector of the economy and another so that in any single colony there could be no beneficial

interaction between the various sectors and organic development. In his recent book *How Europe underdeveloped Africa*, Walter Rodney (1972:162) explains that:

> Colonialism was not merely a system of exploitations but one whose essential purpose was to repatriate the profits to the so-called "mother country." From an African viewpoint, that amounted to consistent expropriation of surplus produced by African labour out of African resources. It meant the development of Europe as part of the same dialectical process in which Africa was underdeveloped.

The apparent decoupling of the "twin" processes of industrialization and urbanization can only be understood by examining another set of interrelated processes: development and underdevelopment. The appropriate context for an examination of these processes is not the geographic area of Africa but the operation of the capitalist mode of production in its imperialist extension.

COLONIAL URBANIZATION AND MIGRANT LABOR

> No one can long be in this country without sensing strong currents of emotion. "If only there were some way," runs the white man's dream, "of having them here and yet not having them here"; but *they*, like the waves of the sea, rise and run and fall upon the white man's world without remission.
>
> BASIL DAVIDSON, *A report on South Africa*

The concept "urbanization" points to population movement to cities, resulting in a proportional concentration of the total population in these areas. In Africa this occurred as a particular form of labor migration. Almost every colonial regime in Africa preferred migrant African labor to labor permanently settled in town. It was not until very late in the history of the use of migrant labor that cautious and tentative moves were made in the former Belgian Congo and Northern Rhodesia to experiment with "stabilization" of the African labor force by encouraging workers to bring their families with them to work locations. Why were Africans incorporated into the colonial system as migrant laborers? Elsewhere (Magubane and O'Brien 1972), the political, social, and economic reasons that lay behind the use of migrant labor have been considered. The following is an examination of the nature of the migrant labor system in relation to the colonial city and the requirements of the metropolitan countries.

The use of migrant labor and the perfunctory stabilization programs were a response to the labor and market requirements of the colonizing powers based on a rational calculus of costs. Karl Marx, in his study of

capitalist organization, explains that workers are included in its system not for their own social interest but because they satisfy the aims and interest of the capitalist system itself. The development of the city in Africa during the colonial era illustrates this point. Laws and policies were promulgated and administered in such a way that only those Africans whose labor power was needed in the towns were admitted. Others were uprooted to create a floating work force that could be used to threaten and depress the wages of those employed in colonial industries. The Stallard commission of South Africa spells out unreservedly the status of Africans in the city (1922:paragraph 42):

> The Native should only be allowed to enter urban areas, which are essentially the White man's creation, when he is willing to enter and minister to the needs of the White man and should depart from there when he ceases so to minister.

This policy was applied in varying degrees throughout the continent. What this meant was simply that the basic interests of Africans as workers and those of white settlers as representatives of the metropolitan capitalist powers were opposed. In fact, they were antagonistic and irreconcilable. This relation was the source of the various laws and regulations specifying the conditions of African entry into the cities as well as of work and residence. The city, as the specific form of bourgeois organization coordinating imperialist interest in Africa, introduced a clear notion of labor as commodity. For as Marx (1969:6) says:

> In themselves money and commodities are no more capital than are the means of production and of subsistence. They want transforming into capital. But this transformation itself can only take place under certain circumstances that centre in this, viz., that two very different kinds of commodity-possessors must come face to face and into contact; on the one hand, the owners of money, means of production, the sum of values they possess, by buying other people's labour-power; on the other hand, free labourers, the sellers of their own labour-power, and therefore the sellers of labour. Free labourers, in the double sense that neither they themselves form part and parcel of the means of production, as in the case of slaves, bondsmen, etc., nor do the means of production belong to them, as in the case of peasant-proprietors; they are, therefore, free from, unencumbered by, any means of production of their own. With this polarisation of the market for commodities, the fundamental conditions of capitalist production are given. The capitalist system pre-supposes the complete separation of the labourers from all property in the means by which they can realise their labor. As soon as capitalist production is once on its own legs, it not only maintains this separation, but reproduces it on a continually extending scale.

Laws regulating urban migration and settlement, together with land, tax, and wage policies, were an attempt to create free wage laborers. First, Africans had to be able to dispose of their labor power as their own. Second, they could not have any other commodity for sale. Concretely,

this meant that Africans had to be "extricated" from traditional kinship and subsistence arrangements and compelled to seek wage labor. In their discussion of Kenya, Donald Barnett and Karari Njama (1966:31–32) explain how Africans were disengaged from indigenous subsistence arrangements through land appropriation:

> . . . in Kenya, as in other territories of east, central and south Africa, African land was appropriated for the exclusive use by immigrant white colonists. That a good deal more land was alienated than could be put to effective use by the settlers is explained in large measure by the latter's need for African labor. Lord Delamere, a leading settler spokesman, made this clear in his appeal to the Labour Commission of 1912. In order to force Africans into the centers of European enterprise, this renowned settler leader urged that the land reserved for "natives" be cut so as to prevent them from having enough for a self-supporting level of production. How, he pleaded, could Africans be obliged to labor for Europeans if they had enough land to successfully breed livestock and cultivate crops for sale.

In the same discussion Barnett and Njama (1966:32) quote an editorial in a settler newspaper calling for a tax and wage policy that would force Africans to migrate to urban centers in search of wage work:

> We consider that taxation is the only possible method for compelling the native to leave his reserve for the purpose of seeking work. Only in this way can the cost of living be increased for the native . . . [and] . . . it is on this that the supply of labour and the price of labour depend. To raise the rate of wages would not increase but would diminish the supply of labour. A rise in the rate of wages should enable the hut and pool tax of a family, sub-tribe or tribe to be earned by fewer external workers.

One could go on multiplying these examples from colonial records; but they would tell the same story. Suffice it to say that these policies together with those which imposed restrictions on permanent African residence in towns created a maze in which the African became an individual of "two worlds" as the expression goes.

In dealing with the subject of migrant labor, one finds oneself a "dupe in good faith of a collective intellectual hypocrisy that clearly misrepresents problems, the better to legitimize the hateful solutions provided for them" (Césaire 1972:10). For example, Hanna and Hanna in their report *Urban dynamics in black Africa* (1969:27) tell us:

> In contemporary Black Africa, most decisions to migrate to a town or to remain there are spontaneous rather than dictated by a government. The basic spontaneous cause of urban in-migration has been the "revolution of values" brought about by European presence . . . which introduced a new set of values and established an infrastructure (e.g., modern schools and industries) providing Africans with opportunities to obtain what was newly valued (e.g., education and wage-earning employment). This revolution has not involved a substitution of one value system for another, but only the addition or exchange or modification of

a relatively large number of specific values. . . . During the first stage of the value revolution, individuals were the predominant agents of change. . . . At least until the emergence of nationalist movements, many Africans believed that Europeans were all-powerful and all-knowing demigods with virtually a divine right to rule. This was partly because Europeans were powerful, skilled, and so forth; it was also due in part to some Africans' transference of defense from their traditional leaders to Europeans.

Given these assumptions, labor migration is commonly misconceived by students of African urbanization simply as "mobility" (see Miner 1967:13; Lerner 1967:27, 30–31; Hanna and Hanna 1969:27). That misconception hides the specific dynamic of the process of colonialism in creating marginally free wage laborers who were only partially integrated into the productive relations of alien capitalism. It also leads to invalid comparisons of the manifestations of colonial labor migration with migration under qualitatively different conditions. For example, Hanna and Hanna (1969:27) comment:

Migration in Africa is not a new phenomenon. Over the centuries, entire peoples migrated to more productive areas, and individual sojourns of various duration have been made to visit relatives, attend funerals, and so forth. The basic contrasts between precolonial and contemporary migration are that in the former fewer individuals (as opposed to entire peoples) were probably involved and rural to rural migration was proportionately greater.

Because the colonial situation was taken for granted, the transformation of precapitalist social relations to meet the imperialist need for labor leads to a scramble for explanations for the process of urban migration. This yields such "causal" factors as susceptibility to innovation among young adults (Hanna and Hanna 1969:47); the "glamor of urban life" (Barber 1967:122); the belief that migration is a rite of passage to manhood; and the desire to escape the dull routine at a cattle post (Schapera 1947; Van Velsen 1961). A one-sided focus on the "liberation" of individuals from the traditional way of life to the exclusion of examining the new forms of bondage into which they enter is also characteristic of bourgeois studies dealing with the transformation of precapitalist into industrial urban society, as this passage from *Genesis of capital* (Marx 1969:7) indicates:

The immediate producer, the labourer, could only dispose of his own person after he had ceased to be attached to the soil and ceased to be the slave, serf, or bondsman to another. To become a free seller of labour-power, who carries his commodities wherever he finds a market, he must further have escaped from the regime of the guilds, their rules for apprentices and journeymen, and the impediments of their labour regulations. Hence, the historical movement which changes the producers into wage-workers, appears, on the one hand, as *their emancipation from serfdom and from the fetters of the guilds, and this side alone exists for our*

bourgeois historians. But, on the other hand, these new freedmen became sellers of themselves only after they had been robbed of all their own means of production, and of all the guarantees of existence afforded by the old feudal arrangements. And the history of this, their expropriation, is written in the annals of mankind in letters of blood and fire. (Emphasis added.)

Another area of confusion concerns the nature of differences in the creation of wage laborers in nineteenth-century England, on the one hand, and in colonial Africa, on the other. This is well illustrated by Epstein's treatment (1967:279) of this problem:

> The drift to towns is a universal concomitant of early industrialization, but the way in which it occurs is not everywhere the same. In 19th century England, for example, the expansion of the industrial towns was achieved by the flow of labour into them from the smaller rural towns in their immediate hinterland. In Africa a few instances of progressive migration have been reported. . . . but in the main urbanization has proceeded, not by a series of stages, but by a sharp leap from small village to distant urban centre, from *kisendji*, the ancient way of life of the tribe, to *kisungu*, the "civilized" way of life of towns. . . . But in Africa the transition to town has been somewhat sharper, paradoxically, the break with the village has been less radical. The *new African urban labourer remained bound by social, political and even religious ties to his kinsmen in the rural areas* so that, as Mitchell observes, . . . it is the *circulation* of the labourer rather than its *migration* which has become its characteristic feature. (Emphasis added.)

Though recognizing the difference in migration patterns in a superficial manner, Epstein does not seem to understand the nature and dynamics of the process involved and so must resort to an empirical description of its appearance. Instead of examining the relations between European colonizers and colonized Africans, between capital and labor, Epstein (as do other social scientists) looks to the characteristics of Africans to explain urban migration. This approach results in acculturation studies in which the "adjustment problems" of Africans are the central concern (cf. Hanna and Hanna 1969:58–61); and in typologies in which the process of creating free wage laborers is transformed into static categories, such as townrooted/country-rooted (Mayer 1971), or *kisendji/kisungu*.

The search for causes of the form of labor migration that occurred in Africa in the attitudes of Africans or in their traditional social structures is particularly dismaying when one considers the explicitness with which policies regarding migrant labor have been articulated in commission and parliamentary reports and newspapers (see Welsh 1971). Yet even when colonial policies are considered, it is merely to describe them and their superficial effects, and not infrequently to offer justification (see Barber 1967:100–101; Little 1971). Obfuscation becomes complete when the system of labor migration created by the colonialist powers is cited as the cause of agricultural deterioration and economic instability (Wilson 1941).

Labor migration together with the "native reserve" is the form in which the social transformation required by expanding capitalism was accomplished in Africa. In this way the labor requirements of capitalist agriculture and capitalist extractive and manufacturing industries, as well as the service sector generated by European settlement, were met. However, the migrant labor system was not simply a way of bringing worker and employer together. It was a way of realizing the immediate superprofits necessitated by the development of monopoly capital.[3] Through land appropriation the precapitalist modes of production were disrupted to the extent that individuals could be separated from the land. The remnants of these productive systems were then incorporated into the colonial order by means of "native reserves." This incorporation subsidized profit-making by compelling Africans to retain a stake in agricultural production. This would maintain the worker's family, as well as the worker, intermittently, thus allowing the expropriation of additional surplus value. In an attempt to justify the migrant labor system by indicating how it benefited both European and African, Barber (1967:100) inadvertently describes the extraction of superprofits through the depression of wages:

> European employers were permitted [by the migratory patterns] to obtain laborers at low wage rates — and certainly at rates below those they would have been obliged to pay had circumstances demanded that the money wage be high enough to cover the minimum requirements of both the African worker and his family. As it was, African labor would usually be obtained in the required volume with wages sufficient to provide a "single" worker with his subsistence plus an incentive bonus [*sic*].

The migrant labor system brought "ready-made" workers (Gorz 1970:29) into urban areas where their labor power could be efficiently exploited, and it returned them to the native reserves when they were not needed or were no longer useful. Africans were, like implements, units of labor that could be discarded when they ceased to be useful. Moreover, insofar as Africans were "temporary sojourners" in the cities and not permanent residents, they did "need" the infrastructural facilities that would require an outlay of social capital. In urban areas the minimal requirements of African workers were met to enhance their productivity

[3] In the following passage Mandel (1969:453–454) explains the necessity and meaning of superprofits: "The export of capital and the colonialism associated with it are monopoly capital's reaction to the fall in the average rate of profit in highly industrialised metropolitan countries, and the reduction in profitable fields for investment of capital in these countries. In this sense they are only the expression at a particular moment in history of a general characteristic of the capitalist mode of production, of the way it grows and spreads: capital moves towards spheres in which the rate of profit expected is higher than the average. Colonial super-profits are thus to be defined as profits higher than the average profits obtained by capital in the metropolitan country."

(Van der Horst 1971) while the burdens of reproducing labor and supporting nonproductive individuals[4] were shifted into the so-called traditional African economy. The savings thus realized were a source of additional profits. Both the impoverishment of the countryside and the poverty of African urban life were created by the requirements of monopoly capital. Migrant labor and the native reserve were complementary aspects of the strategy by which a high rate of surplus value was realized in Africa.[5]

Labor migration is also perhaps the clearest expression of capitalist productive relations in which labor power is abstracted from the full potential of humans. In a discussion of labor as commodity, Rühle (1943:327) explains this feature of capitalist relations:

> Inasmuch as labour power attaches to man as a quality inseparable from the individual, since it cannot be isolated from him, or utilized apart from him, the man as a whole, having sold his labour power, passes into the possession of the purchaser. Not, of course, with his stomach, his hunger and thirst, his need for rest, his individual wishes and claims, but only in respect of his labour power. For the purchaser, he is not a human being with a soul, feelings, individuality, happiness and unhappiness; he is not God's image or the crown of creation; he is not even of like kind with the purchaser. For the purchaser, the man who has sold him labour power is nothing but labour power; nothing but arms, hands, fingers, capable of work; nothing but muscles, eyes, voice; nothing but capacity for labour, faculty for production.

Labor and urban policies together with the colonial ideology of African workers as temporary sojourners served this end.

The Europeans did not hesitate to set forth explicitly the condition under which Africans could be incorporated into the colonial order:

> It should be a recognised principle of government that natives — men, women and children — should only be permitted within municipal areas in so far as their presence is demanded by the wants of the white population (quoted by Welsh 1971:187).

Moreover, the import of the colonial strategy of forcing Africans to exist as pure labor was not lost on Africans themselves. For, as David Welsh (1971:189) explains, "it was apparent to Africans that the whites paradoxically wanted their labour but objected to their presence." A 1944 report by Africans challenges the rationality of capitalist imperialism:

[4] Nonproductive individuals included not only the very young, the very old, and the infirm, but also others who could not be sufficiently productive in European enterprises.

[5] For example, according to Mandel (1969:456): "The economy of Northern Rhodesia offers a striking instance of the high rate of surplus value. According to UNO statistics, the *total* amount paid out in wages (to black and white workers) in 1952 was around 33 million dollars, whereas the gross profits of the companies came to nearly 160 million dollars. Such a rate of surplus value, over 400 per cent, existed in Europe only in the age of usurer's, merchant's or commercial capital."

> Why should we now, after helping you Europeans to build your cities and your industries, not be allowed to derive the benefit of our labour (quoted by Welsh 1971:188–189)?

The question remains as to why social scientists have failed to understand and explain the workings of the migrant labor system and the manner in which it shaped the process of urbanization as a major feature of colonial strategy in Africa. The study of migrant labor in Africa typifies the managerial and technical thinking of social science:

> According to the functional requisites of his role the manager is expected to deal with and solve the problems of adapting the behavior of a human being to the structural demands of his institutional setting. It does not matter just what these demands and this setting are (Bauman 1967:403).

All social science is concerned with is proving that the individual has attained a nice stabilization of forces and is adjusted. It is not concerned with whether, perhaps, adjustment and stabilization, while good because they reduce pain, are also bad because they cause development toward a higher ideal to cease.

In sum, the study of urban anthropology in its present form has irreducible ideological components; the burden of its interests and findings tends to legitimate the current social order by inducing approval or resignation in those who take them seriously. The ideological elements are closely related to practical concerns. By their concepts, methods, and style of work, urban anthropologists become consciously or unconsciously ancillary agents of power. Their conclusions can be used for purposes of domination, exploitation, and manipulation. Urban anthropologists pay too little attention or no attention at all to the imperialist context of African problems of urbanization. Precisely by dwelling exclusively on the facts derived from small-scale studies, urban anthropologists blind themselves to the historical processes which underlie the empirical data. The crucial questions left unasked are not simply troublesome elements; rather, they are part of the consistent set of themes and omissions evident in most studies of African underdevelopment. A careful analysis of the themes selected for study and those left out reveals disturbing tendencies. In a world in which knowledge is utilized for manipulative and administrative ends, we should not fail to assess research findings by asking for whom this knowledge is relevant and why some questions have been asked and not others.

CONCLUSIONS

The study of the city and of the social processes unleashed in the form of

urbanization raises fundamental questions about the colonial legacy in Africa. What was the nature of the colonial state? For whose benefit did commerce and industry invade Africa, and what were the implications of this invasion for African industrialization? The trajectory of colonial development in Africa was extractive capitalism which created urban complexes exemplified in the Katanga region of the Congo, the copper belt of Zambia, and the Witwatersrand of the Transvaal in South Africa.

Portugal, Malawi, Lesotho and Botswana for years made their policies subservient to the South African demand for labor in the mines. The copper belt and the Katanga region looked for their laborers in other areas in central and eastern Africa. The various government policies in central and southern Africa were coordinated to create conditions for labor to move from one area to another without let or hindrance. The labor policies applied in the colonial era disrupted the home life of Africans together with their political organizations. In some areas up to 60 percent of the men left home periodically in mass migration to the mining areas and other centers of work in order to raise the poll taxes laid upon them.

African urbanization presented an eloquent, if tragic, example of the process which created broken communities. The towns and cities were abstracted from their environment and were more organically and closely related to the metropolitan countries than to their own hinterland. With no steady growth in the secondary and manufacturing sectors of the economy, no expansion of the internal market was possible. The position of the urban work force itself was unsteady, with its fortunes dependent on the oscillation in the demand for raw materials in the world markets. The uncertainties attendant on all raw material-producing countries were reflected in the urban structural instabilities and the unresolved contradictions between town and country. The sociopolitical consequences for the African city were remarkable. The fall of the price of cocoa in the international market created conditions which led to the fall of Kawame Nkrumah in Ghana, for instance. Who knows what the repercussions of the fall in the price of copper will mean for Zaire and Zambia? The growth of extractive industries did not lead to the development of an internal market or to an articulated commercial sector. The use of the migrant labor system for mining and cash crops led to the most advanced deracination and proletarianization, but without corresponding industrialization to meet the future need for jobs when mineral production became exhausted or unprofitable.

There issues have not been confronted or raised by urban anthropologists, with their focus on problems of acculturation. The simple and almost trivial assumptions of acculturation studies are reflected in such ideological concepts as "Westernization," "destabilization," and "Europeanization," which consciously or unconsciously helped to mask or divert atten-

tion from issues of political economy. The normative concepts[6] used to describe the urban process in Africa show that the link between science and ideology is not accidental, but is an integral part of social investigations. By its methods and techniques of investigation (participant observation and depth interviews), urban anthropology can give insight into the thinking and the mentality of the subject which can be used by those whose interest it is to manipulate and dominate others if the larger process-shaping individual experiences are not disclosed.

The tie between urban anthropology and social engineering is not in doubt. When particular problems are encountered, urban anthropologists and sociologists often act as experts supplying elements of a decision. Anthropology, then, can function practically at two levels, either through the "rationalization" of human behavior or by supplying tactics for the "manipulation" of behavior. This can be achieved by identifying the myths or irrational convictions closely related to the practical experiences of the masses.

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[6] According to Lévi-Strauss (1963:281), "... conscious models, which are usually known as 'nonus,' are by definition very poor ones, since they are not intended to explain the phenomena but to perpetuate them . . . that is: the more obvious structural organizing is, the more difficult it becomes to react to it because of the inaccurate conscious models lying across the path which leads to it."

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Long-Distance Trade and the Formation of the State: The Case of the Abron Kingdom of Gyaman

EMANUEL TERRAY

One of the major contributions of Marxist thought to the study of pre-capitalist societies relates to the problem of the origin of the state. In defining the state as "a machine for the oppression of one class by another" (Marx and Engels 1955: vol. 1, pp. 513–514), Engels formally linked its appearance with the development of social classes. According to Engels, when class oppositions in a society develop beyond a certain threshold, institutions are created that give the appearance of arbitrating and conciliating conflict between the opposing classes. In reality they tend to give the dominant class the means of maintaining and reproducing its supremacy. The genesis of the state is therefore a consequence of the genesis of social classes, and the latter is, in turn, the outcome of a transformation in productive relations; through this transformation the exploitation of man by man is introduced into a previously egalitarian society. More specifically, Engels saw in the birth of the state an effect of the extension of slavery (Engels 1884:154–155) which, in his eyes, was "the first great split of society into an exploiting and an exploited class" (1884:161).

In the last several years, a number of Marxist and non-Marxist historians and anthropologists, without explicitly seeking to refute Engels' analysis, have emphasized another correlation which would link the establishment of the state with the development of long-distance trade.[1] One step in this direction was taken by Maurice Godelier in 1964. Seeking to explain the extension of the concept of the Asiatic mode of production, Godelier maintained that, contrary to what Marx thought, the Asiatic mode of production is not necessarily linked to the existence

[1] For a definition of long-distance trade, see Meillassoux (1971:25).

of large-scale economic projects — irrigation, drainage, road construction, and the like — which would simultaneously call for the intervention of a centralized state and for the appropriation of surplus from peasant communities designed to ensure the functioning of that state.

> We propose to add a second hypothesis to Marx's. We argue that another form of the Asiatic mode of production might exist which allows a minority to dominate and exploit communities without interfering directly in their conditions of production, but by intervening indirectly, appropriating surplus in the form of labor or goods. In West Africa, the kingdoms of Ghana, Mali, Songhai, etc. did not arise from the organization of large-scale economic projects; rather their appearance seems to be linked to control of intertribal or interregional commerce exercized by tribal aristocracies on the trade in precious products (gold, ivory, skins, etc.) between Black Africa and White Africa (Godelier in CERM 1969:87).

In this perspective, the formation of the state remains strongly linked to the appearance of exploitation, but the latter is carried out not in the sphere of production but in the sphere of distribution: it is by controlling product distribution that the "tribal aristocracies" appropriated the surpluses necessary for their existence and their hegemony.

A few years later, Catherine Coquery, developing Godelier's leads, endeavored to clarify the idea of an "African mode of production" defined as "the combination of a patriarchal, communal economy and control of long-distance trade by an exclusive group" (Coquery 1969:73). Coquery began by pointing out the low productivity of agriculture in tropical Africa: "Black Africa is no doubt the one place where agriculture was least likely to produce surplus-value" (Coquery 1969:70).[2] Thus the appropriations imposed on the peasant communities have primarily "a symbolic value as guarantor of the social structures" (Coquery 1969:71). In reality, either the collected products are immediately redistributed, and it is only in so far as the aristocracy makes itself the exclusive agent of this redistribution that the appropriations contribute to an affirmation of its authority; or else, they lead to conspicuous consumption intended to display the aristocracy's wealth and power. For its immediate subsistence, according to Coquery, the aristocracy obtains what it needs "with the help of limited domestic slavery, not comparable to that of the true slave-based mode of production" (1969:71). In other words, it is not from its immediate dependents — subjects, captives — that it draws most of its wealth:

> The African despot exploited his subjects less than he exploited the neighboring tribes: it is, in fact, from long-distance trading that the major part of the surplus

[2] The term surplus-value is used here in a totally improper way, since it has meaning only within the capitalist mode of production, where it means the result, in goods or money, of the surplus-labor wrested from the productive salaried worker. Here one should speak of "surplus" or "overproduction."

originated. . . . The major appropriations were not levied on village communities; they took forms which applied to those outside of the territory: annual raids or peaceful commercial transactions in which products were obtained at prices much below their value (1969:71, 72).

Coquery pointed out more clearly in her speech at the conference on feudalism of the Centre d'Etudes et de Recherches Marxists (CERM) that the power of the aristocracy comes "from its domination over commercial routes and transactions" (in CERM 1971:244). She added:

Perhaps the State does not have its origins in commerce, but the aristocracy strengthened itself because it had a grip on large-scale trade. . . . It was from long-distance trade that surplus-value was appropriated and this surplus-value permitted the ruling class to consolidate itself by accumulating prestige goods, sometimes for hoarding but more often for ostentatious display (in CERM 1971:245).

While not treating the question of the precise historical circumstances of the formation of States, Coquery sees the control which states exert over long-distance trade as the foundation of their power.

More recently Samir Amin proposed a similar hypothesis; referring to precapitalist social formations of tropical Africa, he wrote:

Long-distance trade brings into contact societies which are not familiar with each other. They exchange products whose cost of production is not known to the other society, rare products which have no substitutes. The social groups which take part in this trade have a position of monopoly from which they benefit (Amin 1972:7).

He then showed that long-distance trade can play a decisive role in the very establishment of some social structures:

This is so when the surplus which the local dominant class can derive from the producers within the structure in question is limited by the low level of development of productive forces, and/or by different ecological conditions, or by the successful resistance of the village community to the appropriation of their surplus. In this case long-distance trade allows the transfer (and not, most certainly, the generation) of a fraction of surplus from one society to another through profit associated with a monopoly position. For the society which benefits from this, it can be essential and can constitute the principal basis of the wealth and the power of its ruling classes (Amin 1972:7).

On the basis of appreciably different premises, other historians, who do not explicitly claim to be Marxists, have arrived at quite similar conclusions. Studying the history of the commercial routes which linked the Niger Valley to the Gulf of Guinea, Yves Person, for example, wrote:

I believe it is impossible that a commercial route of any importance can be organized in a region occupied by stateless societies without very rapidly destroying their segmentary structure (in Vansina, et al. 1964:332).[3]

In fact, regular trade relies on a state of peace and security which segmentary societies are incapable of guaranteeing; it therefore requires the establishment of a centralized authority able to maintain order over a wide area. In return, the formation of this authority gives trade a new impetus, and that is why Person declared:

It seems wholly likely to me that it was the formation of the Mossi-Dagomba states which permitted the development of the large commercial center of Djenné. It is probable that the Malinkese traders (*dioulas*) profited from the security assured by the state organization of Mossi-Dagomba and made use of their territory [the latters'] to descend towards the middle Volta in search of new gold-mines (in Vansina, et al. 1964:331).

Here again we have both the affirmation of reciprocal influence between the development of trade and that of state institutions, and the affirmation that the first is at the origin of the second, since it creates the need for security to which the second responds.

I should therefore like to demonstrate, on the basis of research which I carried out in the Ivory Coast, both in Dida and in Abron country, that theses of this type considerably overestimate the role of large-scale trade in the formation of the states of tropical Africa. That it played a role is unquestionable but it is not a direct role, and it is impossible to isolate it from a number of other important factors. We shall attempt to highlight these factors in the observations which follow.

First, let us examine the problems of security raised by Yves Person. I do not believe, as he does, that the functioning of a major trade route is incompatible with the maintenance of a social structure of the segmentary type: the example of the Dida shows that such coexistence is possible. Two trade routes running from north to south traversed the country of the Dida: one connected the region of Divo to Yokobwe, passing through Tablegiku and Gitri, the other connected the region of Lakota to Fresco, passing through Kazeribwe and Gbagbam. Along these routes, the Dida people transported to the coast ivory, rubber, and captives which they exchanged with their partners at Avikam and Godie for goods of European origin — firearms and munitions, fabrics, alcohol, iron bars, sea salt, and dried fish. In this way they also acquired the ankle rings which played the role of matrimonial goods in their society. This circuit had an exten-

[3] Peter Morton-Williams also affirms the existence of a link between long-distance trade and the structure of the state, and he illustrates his thesis with the help of examples taken from the region which interests us. But he describes rather than explains this link (in Douglas and Kaberry 1969:79–98).

sion towards the north: in return for ankle rings brought from the coast, the Dida obtained loin-cloths in Gouro and Baule country (in Meillassoux 1971:146–147; Terray 1969:298). The evidence gathered by Marc Augé in Alladian and Avikam country (in Meillassoux 1971:157) and by myself in Dida country both emphasize the intensity of this commercial movement.

Before the period of French colonization Dida society had a purely segmentary structure. Before the arrival of the whites the only recognized authority was that of the elders of the lineage; both the district chiefs and the village chiefs were the creations — and usually the creatures — of the colonial administration. This does not mean that Dida country did not have any security problems. On the contrary, as I have shown elsewhere, war was quite frequent and abductions were a relatively commonplace practice (Terray 1969:302ff.). But the Dida were able to come to grips with and to some extent overcome these difficulties with the help of the only resources which the lineal structure of their society offered. In the first place, the necessities of trade contributed appreciably to maintaining the cohesion of lineages: in fact, an expedition to the coast was a hazardous enterprise which demanded the mobilization of a large number of people. The goods conveyed in one direction or the other had to be placed under a strong escort, and the village had to be left well guarded. Only large and strongly integrated lineages were able, therefore, to engage in such enterprises (Terray in Meillassoux 1971:148–149; Terray 1969:328). Moreover, the matrimonial strategy of the Dida was partially determined by the exigencies of trade; a Dida village preferred to send its girls to be married in more southern localities; in this way it acquired allies and nephews on the maternal side in the regions which lay between it and the sea; its trade expeditions could then stay with these allies and nephews when they reached the coast; each village where one of their sisters was married constituted a resting-place for them where lodging and assistance were guaranteed (Terray in Meillassoux 1971:150; Terray 1969:189). Gaps in the network of kinship links, were filled with the help of certain institutions whose effect, if not purpose, was to ensure the security of the travelers. Let us cite among them the system of clans (*yuru*) and political alliances (*meno*). I have described elsewhere the system of *yuru*: the Dida were divided into four clans called *yuru* each of which was characterized by a particular prohibition transmitted through the female line. The members of a *yuru* owed each other hospitality and protection. In villages where the traveler had relatives, allies, or "friends" (*tekpa*) they were responsible for receiving him, but where he knew nobody the *yuru* intervened to defend him against possible abduction attempts (Terray in Meillassoux 1971:150; Terray 1969:248ff.). This same obligation of mutual assistance was an important consequence of the bonds of political alliance which the Dida forged with several neigh-

boring peoples, in particular with the Abidji, the Godie, and the Neyo, who were also their trading partners. Thanks to these various devices, the Dida were able to preserve the minimum of order required in their territory for a regular flow of trade without surrendering the segmentary character of their social organization.

It might be argued that if the Dida were able to do without a centralized authority it was because their trade was organized within a "relay" system:[4] the transit of merchandise through the territory of a people is ensured by the people of that territory without the intervention of foreign merchants whose protection would have required stronger measures. In the case of the Dida this argument is not relevant. Apollonian peddlers who went as far as the Lakota or Divo regions, several hundred kilometers from the coast, circulated within the territory alongside the Dida; they supplied the Dida blacksmiths with most of their ingots of crude iron. It seems, therefore, that there is no necessary correlation between the presence or absence of the state and the fact that the circulation of goods is organized and ensured by foreigners or "nationals."

The example of the Dida is in no way an isolated one. Catherine Coquery, for instance, mentions the case of large-scale Congolese trade "which monopolized products and men over enormous distances" (Coquery 1969:69); the agents were recruited notably from the Boubabgui, a segmentary population situated at the junction of the Oubangui and Congo Rivers. From this she concludes correctly that it is not possible "to equate long-distance trade and centralized authority" (Coquery 1969:68). But it would then be necessary to determine in what circumstances and under what conditions long-distance trade favors the formation of states and to ask what type of large-scale trade contributes to this state formation. But it is precisely on this point that she leaves us unsatisfied.

In effect, we have seen Coquery, and Godelier before her, explain the authority and the wealth of African aristocracies by the control which they exercized over commercial routes and long-distance trade. But this hypothesis seems to me to be much too general to satisfactorily account for the very varied cases revealed by observation. To justify my skepticism I shall use a specific example: that of the Abron kingdom of Gyaman.

The kingdom of Gyaman was founded in the last years of the seventeenth century. Until the colonial conquest it occupied a territory in the northeast of the present-day Ivory Coast and in the northwest of present-day Ghana, between the Komoe and the Black Volta, where the forest meets the savannah. Even before the formation of the kingdom the territory had already been crossed by a very important commercial route

[4] On the idea of relays and the distinction between relays and networks proposed by Boutilier at the IAI conference in Freetown, see Meillassoux (1971:30).

which linked the Niger River to the Gulf of Guinea going through Bobo-Dyulaso, Kong, and Kumasi or Anyibilekru. Along this route the following products were transported: from south to north, kola from Ashanti, gold, and products of European origin, notably firearms, gunpowder, and sea salt; from north to south, wrought iron from Bobo-Dyulaso, cotton from Buna, captives, Saharan salt, cattle, and ivory. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, a second route came into use; it crossed the first on Gyaman territory. It linked Kong to Hausa country and passed through Kintampo, Salaga, Yendi, Sansanne Mango, and Nikki; it ran, therefore, from west to east; from the west came kola from Anno, gold from Gyaman, and fabrics from Kong; from the east, manufactured products from Hausa — particularly leather objects.

In Gyaman there existed, if not Coquery's "exclusive control," at least the domination of one group over long-distance trade. This group was the Dyula, Moslem merchants of Malinko origin who were established in the large trading city of Bondoukou, at the very heart of the kingdom. Because of their links with neighboring Dyula communities in Kong, Bobo-Dyulaso, and Buna the Dyula knew what supplies were available in various markets and the differences in price which are the basis of commercial profit. With a plentiful supply of captives and beasts of burden, they took care of the transportation of a large proportion of goods *en route*, notably those which came from the Sudanese savannah. At Bondoukou itself they received the caravans and supplied them with goods made by their captives in the neighboring hamlets; they gave them access to the network of agents which they had in all the large commercial centers of the region. In short, they undertook most of the tasks which are associated with long-distance trade.

Because they did most of the jobs associated with long-distance trade, but not all of them, we can call this supremacy, but not monopoly. In the first place, they did not operate equally on all the routes. While the traffic between Bondoukou and the Niger Valley was indeed under their control, they still faced competition from the Apollonians along the Komoe River, from the Ashanti merchants on the Kumasi road, and from the Hausas in the Salaga zone. Moreover, non-Dyula nationals in the kingdom also organized commercial expeditions; the majority of these headed toward the coast of the Gulf of Guinea, but some of them went to Kong. One could not, therefore, attribute to the Dyula an "exclusive control" over long-distance trade.

Nevertheless, thanks to the extent and efficiency of their commercial organization, the Dyula received the lion's share of the profits from this trade. So far, Catherine Coquery's description seems to fit the situation in Gyaman; but now the difficulties begin: in fact, from a political point of view, the Dyula in no way constituted the dominant class in the kingdom; all political, administrative, judicial, and military power was in the hands

of the Abron, a martial aristocracy of Akan origin. Ruled by a king and four provincial chiefs, this aristocracy brought under subjection farmers of Kulango origin from whom it exacted a relatively light tribute.

In theory, the sovereignty of the Abron people extended over the Dyula, as over the other populations in the kingdom. In reality, the Dyula in Gyaman enjoyed the status of privileged guests. The Imam of Bondoukou sat as an equal in the royal councils. Numerous *karamoko* resided at the courts of the monarch and the provincial chiefs where they acted as advisors and providers of amulets which were very much in demand during wars, epidemics, and droughts. The Dyula could not be fined nor sacrificed at the time of a great person's funeral and, as we shall see, they did not pay any tribute. How, then, was the authority of the Abron exercized? The king intervened as the highest authority in conflicts among Dyula; during wars, the Dyula owed military assistance to the Abron. On the whole, although Dyula influence was very great, one could not strictly speaking consider them to be a part of the dominant class; and the Abron wished to keep up the distinction: every Abron who converted to Islam was immediately excluded from all political functions; moreover, although Bondoukou was by far the largest town in the district, it was never the capital either of the kingdom nor even of one of the kingdom's provinces. Consequently, in the case of Gyaman, one could not regard hegemony over long-distance trade as the direct and immediate basis for political hegemony, since these two hegemonies were exercised by two distinct social groups.

This duality is not only found in Gyaman; we find it, in different degrees, in Buna between Dyula merchants and the aristocracy of Dagomba origin (Boutilier in Meillassoux 1971:246); at Salaga between Hausa traders and local Gonja chiefs (and the representatives of the Asantehene who came into the area at the beginning of the nineteenth century [Levtzion 1968:28–29; Wilks in Meillassoux 1971:128]), and even in Kong where there seems to have been a power conflict between the important wholesale merchants of the town and the "princes," descendants of the founder of the Seku Watara Empire, who lived in the neighboring villages (Person n.d.). In Ashanti itself, even though the king and the chiefs took an active part in commercial transactions, most of the long-distance trade was conducted by Dyula and Hausa caravans.

However, one could imagine an indirect connection between the control of long-distance trade and political power which would support Coquery's thesis: at Gyaman, the wealth accumulated by the Dyula could be the basis of Abron supremacy, if the Abron were in a position to compel the Dyula to share their profits. One could suppose, for example, that the Abron benefited from controlling territories crossed by commercial routes. They could impose taxes on the goods in transit. But this is precisely what did *not* happen; the Abron appropriated neither taxes nor

tolls on commerce, and the reason for this is clear: to go from Bobo-Dyulaso to Kumasi, one can pass through Kong and Bondoukou, but one can also go through Buna and Bole; similarly, going from Kong to Salaga, one can pass either through Bondoukou or Buna. Thus, if the Abron tried to impose "duties" of toll on their territory, this would only have the effect of diverting to Buna traffic which would otherwise be headed for Bondoukou or Gyaman. Three times, in 1750, 1805, and 1825, the Abron invaded Buna and tried to achieve a monopoly position by eliminating the rival city. But Buna seems to have been protected by a very old alliance with Ashanti (Fuller 1921:1): the Abron occupied Buna, but were never able to hold on to it, and the permanent competition with Buna prevented them from imposing any tax whatsoever on commerce. It could be argued that the gifts which the caravans usually presented to the sovereign of the territory which they crossed constituted a kind of duty. But in the case of Gyaman, these gifts were amply compensated for by those which the Dyula received from the king in exchange for their advice and their amulets.

Here again the case of Gyaman is not an isolated phenomenon. In the Ashanti kingdom some commercial transactions — dealing with kola and captives — are subject to taxes, but these taxes are levied only on the Ashanti partners in the transaction; foreign traders are exempt. To Dupuis, who suggested extending taxation to compensate for the losses incurred on the abolition of the slave-trade, the Asantehene Osei Bonsu replied:

> I cannot do this, the Ashanti custom is different. Here only the kings and great personages engage in trade, just as I do. . . . If they come from another country to trade at Kumasi, they demonstrate their friendship and give me a present; therefore, unquestionably, I cannot tell them to give me gold when they sell and buy merchandise. Moreover, some merchants are sons or brothers of kings, or great captains; I must not say to them: "Give me gold." I must give them gold and provisions, and send them back home contented and rich, so that they will know, in other countries, that I am a great king and know what is just (Dupuis 1824:167).

It is interesting to note that, according to information obtained from the Moroccan Shereef Shabayni in 1790, and published by Jackson, at Timbuktu "the Moors do not pay duty; they say that if they are forced to do so, they will no longer bring their merchandise there" (Jackson 1820:14). Likewise at Hausa, "foreign merchants pay nothing, because the inhabitants of Hausa think that they need to be encouraged" (1820:44). The fact is that a commercial route or market could be taxed only when there were no alternative routes or market places. But where there were several possible routes, as was usually the case between the Niger River and the Gulf of Guinea, the local aristocracies were not in a position to tax the merchants; their problem was to attract them. Thus, not only did they not

allow any taxes direct or indirect, on the merchants' profits, but, as we shall see, there are reasons for believing that at least a part of these profits actually came from the local aristocracies. The aristocrats' wealth did not come from any control over the commercial routes since in most cases competition made this control inoperable; neither did their wealth come from profit earned from long-distance trade as this profit remained in the hands of the merchants. Thus the question of the origin of the aristocrats' wealth remains completely unanswered.

All the same, Coquery and Samir Amin suggest another interpretation; for example Coquery writes:

> Control over long-distance trade certainly required the subordination of the rest of the population to those who benefitted from that trade, and were anxious to maintain their privileges. But the control exercised by the ruling class was generally manifested indirectly, by the exclusive enjoyment of foreign goods which were accumulated in the same way that prestige goods were hoarded by the elders within subsistence, community economies (Coquery 1969:72).

In other words, the control which local aristocracies exercized over long-distance trade was not so much over those who carried on the trade but over the populations which the aristocracies dominated. The aristocracies tried to assert themselves as the merchants' sole clients and to exclude their subjects from all transactions. Thus they would obtain the "exclusive enjoyment" of the goods that were made available through long-distance trade. In short, their wealth and supremacy would come, on the one hand, from the fact that they *took part* in long-distance trade and, on the other, from the fact that, except for a few specialized merchants, they were the *only ones* to do so.

To be sure, the hegemony of local aristocracies is most clearly indicated by their almost exclusive access to certain goods obtained through long-distance trade. However once this is established, two problems still need to be solved. The local aristocracies, as Catherine Coquery tells us, got rich because they took part in long-distance trade. Clearly they must have had something to offer in return for the prestige goods sold by the merchants, and we are once again faced with the question of the origin of their wealth. Besides, as Catherine Coquery further informs us, the local aristocracies maintained a sort of monopoly over these prestige goods by preventing their subjects from engaging in trade. But we do not find this phenomenon of exclusion either in Gyaman or Ashanti. All Gyaman nationals who had the material means were entitled to organize commercial expeditions to the coast or to Kong; everyone could go to the market at Bondoukou. Referring to the Akan state in present-day Ghana, Daaku writes: "As for the organization of commerce, evidence suggests that no Akan state monopolized it to the exclusion of its subjects. On the contrary, all subjects were encouraged to participate in commerce" (in

Meillassoux 1971:172). This statement should probably be amended slightly with regard to Ashanti: on the one hand, the Asantehene and the principle chiefs did have rights over certain goods; the first kolas sold at the Salaga market were theirs, and after their arrival, the routes were closed until the stock was sold out. Thus the king and the chiefs alone profited from the high prices which the merchants were prepared to pay for the first deliveries of the year (Rattray 1929:109–110). On the other hand, if one believes Bowdich, the Ashanti aristocracy hardly encouraged its subjects to participate in commerce:

> [The Ashanti] are as uninterested in commerce as were the early Romans. Their government, considering that a state can grow only through conquest, had a tendency to repress rather than favor this inclination towards commerce. It fears that commerce would deaden their warrior nature, and that, if the merchants became too powerful for the government, or too skillful to be outmaneuvered, they will sacrifice the glory and ambitions of the nation to their own greed (Bowdich 1819:335–336).

Public opinion seems to have been the only instrument which the Ashanti chiefs used to deter their subjects from engaging in trade; no positive measures were taken to stop them and indeed, numerous Ashanti of all ranks took part in commercial expeditions to the north as well as to the coast. On route to Kumasi, Bowdich and Dupuis passed many caravans of all sizes. The question of whether these caravans should have free access to the coastal markets was at the root of many conflicts between Ashanti and its neighbors in the south.

On the whole one can accept Coquery's view that the kings and the chiefs were really the principal clients of long-distance trade. "Here, only the kings and the important personages are involved in commerce," said Asantehene Osei Bonsu to Dupuis (1824:167). We shall return to this point. But their dominant position did not result from formal laws which they might have enacted and enforced to exclude their subjects. Here again one can speak of privilege and supremacy but not of exclusive control or monopoly.

Three questions remain unanswered in this analysis:

1. If the local aristocracies derived their wealth and power neither from control over long-distance trade nor from taxes imposed on peasant communities (and we have already indicated — going along on this point with Catherine Coquery — that these were low), where did this wealth and power come from?

2. If the local aristocracies did not formally exclude their subjects from long-distance trade, how did they insure their own dominant position in it?

3. Finally, if long-distance trade did not constitute the basis of their hegemony, why were they so anxious to attract it to the territory they governed?

Let us now try to answer these questions, again refering to the example of the kingdom of Gyaman. In addition to its role as a place of transit, which we have already mentioned, Gyaman took part in long-distance trade in two ways: by exporting two major products, ivory and gold, and by providing some manpower for the transport jobs associated with this trade.

The king and the chiefs completely controlled the traffic in ivory. Hunters were compelled to hand over the tusks of slaughtered elephants which were then either transformed into ornaments or horns for the king and chiefs or were sold to outside traders, the profit going to the king or chiefs. Here, their monopoly position with respect to a particular export product fits Coquery's thesis. But the importance of the sale of ivory in the "external trade" of Gyaman was always far less than that of gold.

The territory which the Gyaman have occupied since the eighteenth century was renowned from the earliest times for the abundance of its gold resources. Long before the kingdom was founded this wealth attracted Nafana gold-seekers to the region. Their descendants still live in several villages around Bondoukou (Person in Vansina et al. 1964:330). Dyula merchants were also attracted by gold and, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, they founded the large city of Bighu (Begho) (Wilks 1961:5). Ivor Wilks has shown, convincingly in my opinion, that Bighu can be identified with the Beetun of Pacheco Pereira and with the Bitu of As Sadi (Wilks 1969:15). These authors both celebrated the abundance of auriferous beds in the country which they designated by that name. At the beginning of the nineteenth century British travelers who went to Kumasi also emphasized this abundance. Bowdich pointed out that Gyaman "is without possible comparison the area richest in gold" (1819:169). More specifically Dupuis wrote (1824):

> Gyaman, and particularly its provinces of Ponin, Safoy, and Showy, contains the richest gold mines which my informants know of in this region or in any other region of Africa. To illustrate this, they say that in Ashanti, Denkyira, and Wassaw, the metal lodes are found at a depth of twelve cubits (twenty-two feet) below the ground, but that in these provinces of Gyaman, the depth is five cubits (nine feet).

At the same time, Gyaman's reputation as a gold-mining center extended to include Fezzan. Lyon, who stayed at Murzak in 1819, wrote: "They say that the capital of Ouangara, which is south of Timbuktu, is called Battagoo, and that it is a large town in whose surroundings much gold is found (1822:150–151). If one recalls that the Hausa gave Bondoukou the name of Bitugu, it is easy to recognize Lyon's Battagoo as Bondoukou. Some thirty years later, Gordon, who lived on the Cape Coast in 1848, indicated that "The principal mines which the Ashanti possess are

in Gyaman; . . . they are said to be extremely rich mines; according to the reports which have reached us, twenty thousand hands are employed there" (1874:40).

The Abron transformed part of this gold into jewelry and ornaments; they used it to make chairs encrusted with gold for the kings Abo Miri and Adingra. This provoked the anger of the Asantehene Opoku Ware and Osei Bonsu, and caused two invasions of Abron country. According to Bowdich, the Abron made the solid gold steps which King Adingra used to get into bed (1819:307); they also made King Kwaku Agyeman's solid gold scabbard, described by Binger (1892: vol. 2, p. 174). But the rest of the gold was exported. Where? According to Collier, "almost all the gold which the Ashanti bring to the coast is collected in Gyaman" (1824:229). But according to Dupuis, this portion represented only a small part of the gold which the Abron put on the market.

In the early days, this gold was sent to Kong and Madingo country; but later, according to Dupuis

> . . . it reaches Ashanti; from there it moves in small quantities into the maritime provinces of Appolonia, Ahanta, Fantee . . . but the largest part of the metal is taken away by merchants from the interior, or delivered to Mohammedan traders at Yendi, Salaga, Banko, Wabea, and other large towns of the northeast. After being struck into coins, this part of the gold soon reaches Zogho, Salamo, Kook, and finally Nikki . . . where it is made into jewelry and ducats (*mitskal*). In this new form, it rapidly circulates along the Niger River to Housa . . . and from there to all the regions of the Sudan, in the desert and its kingdoms of Bornou, Egypt, Gharb (Dupuis 1824: part 2, pp. lvii–lviii).

Thus gold seems to have been the principal export product of Gyaman. Its status was appreciably different from that of ivory in that all the nationals of the kingdom could get involved in the search for and extraction of the precious metal. Of course, the gold-seeker had to pay a tax to the chief of the district and to the chief of the village when he operated outside the territory of his own village. He had to pay the chief of the province of the king as master of the royal domain whenever he worked beyond the frontiers of his own province. Only the king and the provincial chiefs were exempt from this tax and their men could search for gold anywhere. Moreover, all the nuggets found had to be turned over to them (but these nuggets were not marketed: royal artisans smelted them to produce the jewels and ornaments mentioned above). Finally, thanks to their judiciary powers and the fines which they could impose, the king and the chiefs were able to appropriate a sizable proportion of the gold amassed by private individuals. With the exception of these privileges, the search for gold in Gyaman was a free activity in which, during certain seasons, entire villages were involved. Braulot, who traveled across Gyaman in 1893, witnessed this:

Asikaso . . . is the country richest in gold in all the region. At the end of the rainy season, the people of the villages in the plain go there *en masse* to look for gold by washing auriferous sands. Thus, we found all the inhabitants of Kandena which is near Sapia at Surmakourou (Braulot 1893:80).

But this formal liberty masked substantial inequality. Two methods were used to look for gold. The first involved panning the sands left by streams which flow over auriferous terrain. It was a simple procedure and while it did not seem to be very profitable, it required very little labor. Each family head was able to pan for gold with the help of his immediate dependents which is why, along auriferous rivers, captives of the king and chiefs worked side by side with Abron and Kulango free men and their wives. But real mines were also worked. When a lode was located, shafts of ten meters or more were sunk. A miner would go to the bottom of the shaft and extract earth and blocks of auriferous quartz with a sort of hoe. These were then raised to the surface in calabashes fixed to cords. At the surface, the quartz was crushed and ground and the earth was washed in the water of a nearby stream or in a hole dug for this purpose.

This second method had three characteristics: first, it was much more productive than panning; second, each mining unit required more people than panning did. Simple washing of the sand required a collector or "diver" and a washer. The working of a shaft required a miner, a laborer to raise the extracted earth, and a crusher or washer. Since the work was very tiring and since as much work as possible had to be done during the brief period when work was possible, two teams worked in relays on each shaft. Lodes were not easy to locate and numerous shafts had to be sunk before production could begin. When a lode was finally struck, they attempted to exhaust its supply. There was no horizontal tunnelling and shafts were sunk at very close intervals in the axis of the lode. Finally, work at the bottom of the mines was very dangerous: when a lode was reached, the miner began to dig around himself horizontally; the shaft gradually took on the shape of a cone whose vaults are in danger of collapsing at any moment. According to many sources, cave-ins were numerous and the buried man had only a minute chance of escaping. Thus, mine work was reserved for captives.

If the working of mines required considerable labor, and if this labor was performed by captives, it follows that the only people who could profitably engage in mining were those who had a sufficiently large supply of captives. Only the kings and chiefs had such a supply at their disposal which is why the mines belonged to them: "The ore is chiefly extracted from large shafts which are the property of the dead king. They are in the neighborhood of Briquanti and Kontoosoo," wrote Dupuis after the death of King Adingra (1824: part 2, p. lvi).[5] Contrary to the widespread

[5] According to Dupuis' map, Briquanti and Kontoosoo are west of Bondoukou, between Bondoukou and Herebo.

belief among European travelers at that time, this appropriation of the mines by the king and the chiefs did not result from a monopoly over subsoil products. It was based on the fact that only they had the human resources necessary for such enterprises. In a more general way, the production of gold by both methods rested on the work of captives, since (according to Dupuis' testimony) the panning of auriferous sands also occupied a large number of them:

> On the banks of the Barra, a large stream which has its source near the large Moslem city of Kherabi and flows towards the south to join the Tando or Assinie River, the Gyamans also pan for gold. My informants report that during the rainy season there is enough work to occupy eight or ten thousand slaves for two months (1824: part 2, p. lvii).[6]

Consequently it was natural for the production of gold, based on slave labor, to be dominated by those among the Abron who had the largest number of captives, that is, the king and the chiefs.

Similarly, the transportation of goods bought or sold by the Abron was largely done by their captives. On returning from Gyaman, Lonsdale wrote (1883): "The merchants of all the regions in the interior use mainly slaves as porters." Nine years later, Lang stopping at Bondoukou, echoed him: "A merchant of the interior transports his goods to the coast by means of a half-dozen slaves who are available to carry the goods on the return journey if they have not been sold" (1892). Of course, all porters were not slaves. As we have seen, all nationals of the kingdom could take part in commerce and send caravans to the coast and to Kong. The family head could recruit his relatives or immediate dependents as porters. Moreover, free men could hire themselves out as porters for a wage. But the largest expeditions were made up of captives placed under the surveillance of a son or a servant of the initiator of the enterprise. Here again, owners of many captives played a determining role and consequently the king and the chiefs came first.

Thus, at Gyaman, the captives hold a place in the economy whose importance far surpasses that of the "limited domestic slavery" which Coquery mentions in passing (1969:71). This important discovery allows us to answer two of the questions which we asked earlier: first, the wealth of the local aristocracy proceeded essentially from surplus labor which it extracted from its captives; this labor produced the goods which the aristocracy introduced into the long-distance trade circuits. And if, among the local clients of this trade, the aristocracy occupied a prominent position, it was because it controlled most of the slave labor whose activity maintained the flow of long-distance trade in Gyaman.

Let us emphasize again that the case of Gyaman is not unique and that

[6] The Barra is in fact the River Ba, which flows into the Komoe.

it cannot be explained solely in terms of its gold production. Let us look at the example of Ashanti again. In the eighteenth century Ashanti trade was mainly oriented towards the coast, and the main exports were slaves, gold, and ivory; during this period, the situation in Ashanti was identical to that which we have described in Gyaman. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, following the abolition of the trans-Atlantic slave trade and after a prolonged conflict between Ashanti and Kong had ended, a change took place: Ashanti traffic gradually turned away from the coast, which only provided weapons and salt, and was directed towards Salaga, Mossi, and Hausa country (Wilks in Meillassoux 1971:125–130). At the same time, a new product became the main Ashanti export: the kola nut. Bowdich tells us the reasons for the primacy of the kola:

> When I insisted that they clear the soil, set up plantations, and oversee the work of their slaves, they told me that the Bossee or Gooroo nut grows on its own and does not need any work; that salt is brought to their border by peoples much poorer than they and sells very cheaply without their having to bother to search for it; and that as a result of all this — to which is added the very high price they obtain in the interior for small quantities of rum and iron because they prevent all traffic between the coast and the interior except their own — they can acquire silks and cotton fabrics of a much superior make and quality at a much better price (1819:336–337, see also 334).

Half a century later, Bonnat confirmed this explanation: "With this unique product which costs them nothing, not even the slightest cultivation, the Ashanti acquire all they want from the different peoples who come to this market" (Gros 1884:165).

The production and sale of the kola in Ashanti were organized according to rules that were very similar to those governing the production and trade in gold in Gyaman: in both cases everyone could take part and no monopoly existed. But the equality thus instituted was only apparent. The only tasks associated with the export of kola were gathering, packaging, and transportation. Productivity varied little from one production unit to another. Consequently, the size of the crop put on the market was directly dependent on the number of workers. Whereas a free man of lowly condition could only put his immediate dependents to work, the king and the chiefs could benefit from the labor of their numerous slaves. Kwame Arhin reports elsewhere how, in the production of the kola, the Ashanti used the method of bond-slavery to procure new captives whose work, in turn, increased the lineage's treasure:

> In the region of Bechem and Techimentia, bond-slaves and slaves who had, until then, been mainly employed in the extraction of gold, were used in the gold trade. The bond-slaves came mainly from the most western regions of Ashanti. They borrowed money, in many cases to pay the cost of a trial, and contracted to pay

> their debt and recover their freedom by gathering and transporting kola nuts and selling them at Kintampo. . . . During the decline of the Ashanti kingdom, the use of bond-slaves was the quickest way of obtaining slaves. Enterprising men invested their money in the acquisition of bond-slaves, extended their trade in kola and in this way, obtained slaves who, in turn, made greater expansion possible. With the work of bond-slaves and captives, a man could sell nuts at Kintampo and buy cattle, sheep, and goats, whose sale would increase what the ancient Ashanti regarded as the only real criterion of their wealth: their reserve of gold dust (Arhin 1965:144–145).

As Arhin says, bond-slavery often resulted from court expenses and fines imposed by a chief. The insolvent debtor entered the service of the chief or the man from whom he borrowed the sums necessary for settlement of the payment. Most often the lender was a chief or leading citizen. Fines were payable in gold dust, and because of the taxes and fines they collected, only the chiefs and leading citizens had reserves of gold dust large enough to give credit to poor debtors. To sum up, the Ashanti chiefs did well in the competition revolving around the kola nut trade because they had many captives as well as much gold and not because they had any established monopoly.

From this comparison between Ashanti and Gyaman one can draw a more general conclusion. At the level of development of productive forces which is characteristic of economies like those of Ashanti and Gyaman, the principal factor in the work process is the amount of human labor. Apart from donkeys used for pack transportation, human labor is the only available source of energy. Technology is rudimentary: usually work is done with individual tools, which allows for little variation in productivity; consequently, the efficiency of the work process and the degree to which it is able to transform nature depend directly on the size of the labor force. As a result, the key to economic power is dominion over men, i.e. the possibility of organizing cooperative endeavors on a large scale. Within the framework of a lineage system, this authority belongs to the elders, but the segmentary character of the system reduces the number of workers who can be brought together under the same control. Of course, there are diverse forms of associations which make it possible to bring together elementary groups for labor, but this sort of mobilization only takes place on rare occasions and does not result in large concentrations of labor. In short, lineage organization inevitably implies a certain disperson of manpower. Moreover, in Ashanti, as in Gyaman, land is available in abundance; the instruments of production are made of materials — wood, iron — which are easy to obtain, directly or through trade, and their simplicity means that they can be made by almost anyone. Thus, the subjection of the producer cannot take place through the appropriation of the material factors of production, as is the case in feudalism with land and in capitalism with machines. So, the

establishment of direct, personal bonds of dependence is the best method for obtaining control over a large number of men; it is the key to wealth. Servitude and captivity are the most rigorous and highly developed forms of such bonds of personal dependence. Because of this, the social formation is organized around them.

Indeed, in many respects one can consider the Abron or Ashanti states as machines designed to create and reproduce the material and social conditions necessary for the exploitation of captives. The central role which captivity played in these societies allows us to understand why the aristocracies in power were mostly military aristocracies. In Ashanti as in Gyaman, as we know, the structure of the state was modeled on that of the army, and the subdivisions of the first corresponded to the different bodies of the second. Most important among the obligations which bound the vassals to the sovereign was the duty to give assistance in case of war; and most important among the rights which the aristocracy reserved for itself were the organization of raids to get captives and the power to decide about peace or war. Many captives were prisoners of war; they formed the most important part of the booty seized by the conquerors, and the rules for dividing this booty favored the kings and the chiefs. On the ideological level, the exaltation of great deeds of the past, and the search for the support of ancestors or supernatural powers in future conflicts were the major themes of the ritualistic and religious activity of the state. We saw earlier that the Asantehene did not encourage his subjects to engage in commerce because he wanted to preserve their warrior spirit (Bowdich 1819:335–336).

In a more general sense, Jack Goody has shown that the military technology in use exerts a profound influence on the organization of political power. Where technology is based on the use of the horse, dynastic lineages control large numbers of people and power rotates among the different segments of the lineages. Where it is based on firearms, the government is more autocratic and is supported by much smaller dynasties (Goody 1971:55). Why does military technology have such great consequences?

The above discussion gives us the answer to such a question: we have here social formations based on relationships of captivity. In the end, it is military force which makes it possible to set up and maintain these relationships. Its use is at the root of the very existence of most of the slaves, since a majority of them are prisoners of war. Even those who were purchased were conquered by others, and their original enslavement was most often the result of force. Given the unstable character of the slave market, no state can rely on the market alone for such an essential resource as slaves. War is the surest method of obtaining this resource. Finally, only undisputed military superiority makes local aristocracies safe from a possible revolt by their captives. Consequently,

since slave relationships are the dominant element in the social formation, and since the use of military force is the best way to establish and to perpetuate such relationships, it is natural that the problems posed by the creation and the use of force should be at the very heart of the functioning of the social formation. Two factors, the manner in which this force is organized and applied, and the ways in which it can be controlled, are decisive in determining the organization of the state.

But many other aspects of political life and the political system were marked by the need to reproduce these slave relationships. We have already mentioned judicial power in the Ashanti kingdom, which was monopolized by the kings and the chiefs. Fines were the most frequently imposed penalty and could be paid only in gold dust. Thus, the kings and the chiefs obtained the gold which enabled them either to buy slaves or to obtain the weapons with which to capture them. We have also seen how an unpaid fine led to the bondage of the guilty person, and how, directly or indirectly, this increased the supply of slaves. Sometimes the interest on the loan was so high that the bond-slave could not pay off the debt and gradually became a slave himself. The bond-slave's work helped to produce the resources necessary to purchase additional slaves. Similarly, Abron and Ashanti diplomacy showed two things: (1) that it was necessary to have access to areas where one could acquire the means of military supremacy — in this case to the coast where European vessels brought guns and powder — while preventing rivals from enjoying this free access; (2) that certain neighboring regions had to be transformed into slave reserves by preventing the importation of arms and the formation of strongly organized states there.

On the whole, the study of the Abron and Ashanti states fully confirms Engels' definitions of the state: the state, he said, is "a machine for the oppression of one class by another" (in Marx and Engels 1955: volume 1, pp. 513–514), "the total organized power of the propertied classes . . . in opposition to the exploited classes" (in Marx and Engels 1955: volume 1, p. 645), "an organization of the exploiting class to maintain its external conditions of production, designed especially to keep the exploited class, by force, in a condition of oppression given by the existing mode of production" (in Marx and Engels 1955: volume 2, p. 158). In fact, the Abron and Ashanti states appear to have been the instruments by which the local aristocracies continued to exploit their captives.

Of course, this exploitation had certain limits, and identifying these will help us to understand the relations which the dominant aristocracies maintained with their free subjects, the way in which the social formation as a whole was articulated, and finally, the specific features of Abron or Ashanti slavery compared to ancient slavery (correctly emphasized by Coquery). These limits were first of all of an economic nature. The surplus produced by slaves ensured the immediate subsistence of the

members of the dominant class and exempted them from all productive work. It also allowed the ruling class to acquire goods — alcohol, fabrics — which were objects of conspicuous consumption expressing the dominant class's power and social hegemony. In both cases, the amount of surplus-labor forced out of the slaves was determined by the necessities of consumption — basic or luxurious consumption — and not by the necessities of realizing a commercial profit. Finally, the surplus provided by the slaves was exchanged for goods that were used either in processes of immediate production (iron, cotton) or in processes of reproduction (arms, slaves). But here again, as Claude Meillassoux has clearly shown, these goods were sought for their own sake. The purpose of the transaction, for the purchaser, was not the desire to obtain an additional profit by reselling the merchandise, but the wish to acquire a certain product in the most advantageous conditions (1971:26). In other words, use-value continued to govern the total production of the slaves. As Marx said, "when the form of a society, from an economic point of view, is such that use-value and not exchange-value predominates, the surplus-labor is more or less limited by determined needs; but the character of the production itself in no way creates a devouring appetite" (1959: volume 1, p. 231). Thus, this preeminence of use-value explains why the slaves in Ashanti and Gyaman were not subjected to the same type of intense exploitation as the slaves in ancient Rome or the southern United States, and why Abron or Ashanti slavery did not show the tendency toward expansion and generalization which was inherent in ancient or American forms of slavery. It always coexisted with another mode of production, generally of a domestic or lineage character within which the free subjects of the aristocracy worked and produced.

Moreover, the persistence of a lineage mode of production in the social formation was due to another series of factors associated with the political limits of slave exploitation. Let us again quote Marx:

> The task of surveillance is necessary in all modes of production which are based on opposition between the worker as a direct producer and the owner of the means of production. The greater the opposition, the more important is the role played by surveillance. Thus it is of most importance in the slave system (Marx 1960, volume 7, pp. 48–49).

So the state had to be able to accomplish this task; it had to have the military, political, and ideological means to do so. If these means were limited, the extension of production by slaves and the state's ability to coerce slaves was proportionately limited. In light of this observation, one can note certain obstacles which stood in the way of the spread of slavery to the entire social formation and which contributed to the survival of the lineage mode of production at the same time.

First, the society could only survive if a numerical balance was kept

between the number of free men and the number of captives. To Dupuis, who was shocked at the massacre of prisoners whom the Ashanti brought home in 1818 from Gyaman, the Asantehene Osei Bonsu retorted: "If I do not kill or sell them, they will become powerful and kill my subjects" (Dupuis 1824:164). Moreover, the majority of slaves in the state were foreigners, either imported or seized in raids. A free man could not be reduced to slavery except for bad behavior. In Gyaman, he would soon have been sold to the outside so that he would not have been tempted to escape. In Ashanti the Asantehene Osei Kwame forbade the exportation of captives who were native to the kingdom (Reindorf 1966:135); however, they were not in the same position as their foreign counterparts; in particular, they could be bought back by their relatives. The same was true of bond-slaves. Several reasons explain this preference for captives from the exterior: being isolated, deprived of all social ties and relations, they accepted their lot more easily. Since they came from different regions and different peoples it was difficult for them to band together in a collective rebellion. Furthermore, the cohesiveness of the kingdom and its ability to defend itself would have been seriously compromised if its free subjects could be transformed into slaves at the will of the sovereign and the chiefs. On the contrary, the descendants of slaves gradually mingled with free subjects. As we have indicated elsewhere, the Abron and Ashanti states were probably not sufficiently solid to confront the mortal danger which would have been created by the presence, in their midst, of a true class of slaves who would have transmitted not only their status but also their resentment and rebellious spirit from one generation to the next. All these reasons of a political nature guaranteed a relatively effective protection to free men, and to slaves, the hope that their children would gradually be given their freedom. At the same time the continued existence of the lineage mode of production was guaranteed.

Finally, the need to reproduce the slave relationships determined the functioning of the lineal mode of production itself. We have already mentioned the relatively low tribute levied by the aristocracies on their free subjects. We believe that this moderation can be explained by the aristocracies' wish to keep their free subjects happy in order to be able to count on their cooperation in case of military conflict. In this sense, the slave mode of production seems to have been the chief element of the social formation since it subordinated the functioning of the other mode of production, with which it coexisted, to the requirements of its own reproduction.

One final question has been posed: why were the Abron and Ashanti kings and chiefs so anxious to attract long-distance trade to the territories which they governed? We have already given the answer, and it will suffice to recall it here briefly: the Abron and Ashanti aristocracies valued long-distance trade because, apart from allowing them to hoard

treasure, it was the only means they had to "realize" the surplus which they extracted from their captives and thus to obtain luxury goods which symbolized their social superiority as well as other goods such as captives and arms which made possible the regular reproduction of the social formation. In this sense, but *only* in this sense, long-distance trade was an essential cog in the functioning of the whole of this social formation. Like all methods of distribution, it did not create wealth; this arises in the process of production. But trade gives wealth a concrete form which satisfies the requirements of reproduction.

If we now look at things from a diachronic point of view and examine not the functioning but the genesis of the social formation and of the state which is its political superstructure, will we have to attribute a more important role to long-distance trade? At first sight it would appear that long-distance trade — in this case the trading of gold and kola for Saharan salt — played a decisive role in this genesis. The research of Wilks (in Ajayi and Crowder 1971:354–364) and Levtzion (1968:3–14) has shown that, in the region which interests us, the rise of the state accompanied or closely followed the arrival of Mandingo merchants — Ligbi or Dyula — and the opening of commercial routes between the northern borders of the forest and the Niger Valley. Taking into account the corrections made by Levtzion (1968:194–195) and Flight (1970:264–265) to the chronology proposed by Meyerowitz, the most ancient Akan state, the kingdom of Bono-Mansu, seems to have been founded during the first half of the fifteenth century. Meyerowitz tells us, "from the time of its origins the village of Bono had a twin city, Songo, exclusively inhabited by Moslems, many of whom were literate; there were also commercial ties with the Moslem populations of the western Sudan and northern Africa" (1962:79). The second king of Bono, Akumfi Ameyan, who according to Flight ruled from 1440 to 1450, sent his nephew and successor, the prince Obunumankoma, into these far-off countries so that he could study the trade in gold there (Meyerowitz 1962:82) and it was in the latter's reign that Bono really came into its own. In particular, Obunumankoma imposed the use of gold dust as money and invented the system of weights to measure the gold; the importance of these innovations for trade hardly needs to be emphasized (Boahen 1966:61). In a more general way, the prosperity of Bono and the high level reached by its civilization, Meyerowitz further informs us, depended on trade (1951:198).

Similar observations could be made about the large merchant city of Bighu, whose origin Wilks situates at the beginning of the fifteenth century (1961:5). Bighu was founded by Ligbi and then Dyula merchants, who came respectively from upper Niger and the empire of Mali. They were attracted by the wealth of the auriferous deposits in the region. It appears that the relations between the Mandingo of Bighu and the Nafana kingdom of Banda were quite similar to those which, much later,

united the Dyula of Bondoukou to the Abron state; according to the traditions set down by Kwabena Ameyaw,

> the Mohammedan group which lived among the Nafanas was placed under the authority of Sullemamu (the Iman) at Bighu. These Mohammedans spoke the Ligbi which is still the language of their descendants today. They were merchants, and the town of Bighu . . . became a large commercial center at that time. . . . Several years later, in addition to trading with the Mohammedans, the kings of Banda asked them to pray for them, especially in the event of war (Ameyaw n.d.).

According to Meyerowitz, Bighu was even the capital of the kingdom of Banda (1952:35), although the information gathered by Goody and Levtzion does not confirm this. Whatever the case may be, the bonds thus created probably explain why the Nafanas of Banda took refuge with the Ligbi of Bighu when they abandoned the town (Levtzion 1968:11). It is not easy to fix precisely the date at which the kingdom of Banda was set up; we have certain knowledge that it existed at the beginning of the seventeenth century, since at that time it was attacked by the king of Bono, Kurompe Ameyaw, whose reign Flight places between 1600 and 1615 (Meyerowitz 1958:118).

According to Levtzion, Bono and Bighu, which both have connections with Djenne, did not, however, belong to the same commercial system: "Whereas leaving Bono the route passed along the White Volta, the Bighu traffic flowed either along routes through Buna and Bobo, or through Bole and Wa, to the west or east of the Black Volta" (Levtzion 1968:8). According to this hypothesis, the first two states of the region were therefore formed at the ends of the two principal itineraries which link the Akan forest to the Niger Valley, and they were both associated with a flourishing commercial center. So in a certain sense the Abron state and the commercial town of Bondoukou only took the place left vacant as a result of the decline of their predecessors. At Bono, this decline affected the state, which from the end of the eighteenth century was seriously disturbed by internal conflicts (Meyerowitz 1962:83); at Bighu, it was the commercial center which went into decline. It also suffered from an internal crisis, or a series of internal crises, and its activity became weakened because of the troubles which ravaged the Nigerian Sudan following the conquest of Songhay by the Moroccans (Wilks 1961:11; Levtzion 1968:11). They were closely enough connected for the difficulties of the one to rebound on the other; thus Gyaman and Bondoukou developed out of the simultaneous decline of Bono and Bighu; what changed was the nature of the elements which made up the political and commercial structure of the region, and not the structure itself.

Thus, the existence of a correlation between the expansion of long-distance trade and the emergence of the state cannot be denied, and the thesis put forward by Coquery and Amin seems after all to have some

validity. But the problem is whether this correlation indicates a direct causal link, or whether the series of causes and effects which leads from the first process to the second includes some intermediary link which ought to be specified. If we examine the social relations which were established in the region after the arrival of the Mandingo merchants, we notice that, from the end of the fifteenth century on, captives fulfilled the same economic functions as they did in the Abron social formation.

In his *Description of Africa*, written in 1506–7, Valentim Fernandes gave quite a precise description of the mines where the merchants of Djenné obtained their gold, and Mauny has shown that this description could not refer to any place but the auriferous beds of the Akan forest (Mauny 1961:359–360). At the same time Pacheco Pereira wrote:

> Two hundred leagues from this kingdom of Mandingua there is a region with much gold; it is called Toom. The inhabitants of this region have doglike faces and teeth, and tails like dogs'. . . . The merchants of Mandingua go to the markets of Beetuu, Banbarranaa and Bahaa to obtain gold from these monstrous peoples (Pereira 1937:87).

Now we know that the Mandingos called the Akan by the name of Ton. It appears therefore that the two descriptions concern one and the same region: the country of Bitu which, as Wilks has shown, was confused with the surroundings of Bighu in local tradition (Wilks 1969:15). What do these descriptions tell us about the economic role of slaves? First, they had to extract gold:

> The gold mines are seven in number, and are divided among the seven kings, each of whom has his own. The mines are very deeply sunk in the earth. The kings have slaves whom they send into the mines, and they give them women whom they take along, and they conceive and raise children in these mines. The kings furnish them with both food and drink (Fernandes 1938:87).

Slaves were also used to transport merchandise: "When these Ungaro arrive at Djenné, each merchant brings with him one or two hundred Negro slaves or more, to transport salt on their heads from Djenné to the gold mines, and to carry back gold" (Fernandez 1938).[7] Even during this period, therefore, it was the work of captives which maintained and made possible long-distance trade.

The importance of slave labor in this region explains why it quickly became an importer of slaves. They came from several places, but primarily from the Niger Valley. Pacheco Pereira describes the gold trade as being carried out in relays: first, as we have seen, when they wanted to obtain gold, the Mandinguan merchants went to the markets of Beetuu and the neighboring towns; then, "the inhabitants of the towns called

[7] The Ungaro are the Wangare or Dyula.

Beetuu, Banbarranaa, and Bahaa go to the country of Toom to get gold in exchange for the goods and captives which they take there" (Pereira 1937:89). It is therefore likely that the inhabitants of Beetuu were often only intermediaries, and that the slaves they sold at Toom were entrusted to them by their Mandinguan partners. This is what the traditions gathered on the spot by Kwabena Ameyaw indicate: "Bighu became an important commercial center at this time. . . . The principal products from the forest were the kola nuts and gold, which were sent to the north from Bighu and exchanged for cattle, pearls, slaves, fabrics, and copper objects which caravans transported to the south" (Ameyaw n.d.). But other captives probably arrived from the south as well. At the end of the fifteenth century Portuguese ships brought slaves bought at Benin to the Gold Coast (Pereira 1937:121, 126); we know through Pacheco Pereira that at this time Mandinguan merchants frequented the palace *de La Mine* (de Barros 1937:124). They sent at least some of the slaves which the Portuguese brought to the north; in fact, a quarter of a century later, King John III, who reigned from 1521 to 1527, forbade this traffic because the slaves involved "are sworn to serve the devil forever: in fact, either they remain in their original state, or they become Moslems when, as a result of the trade between the Moors and the negroes of the province of Mandingua, they fall under the power of the former" (de Barros 1937:126). One can conclude, therefore, that some of them did not get beyond Bighu and were harnessed by the inhabitants of the region to the tasks of extraction and transportation which we have already discussed.

In the light of these facts, how can one characterize the specific effects of long-distance trade? We feel that long-distance trade introduced slave relations of production into social formations which were, until then, characterized by lineal modes of production sometimes accompanied by simple domestic slavery. And it would seem that these slave relations of production in turn brought about the formation of a state, as a necessary condition for their functioning and their reproduction.

From this point of view, we do not object so much to Coquery's and Amin's assertion that the development of long-distance trade exerted an influence over the structure of the state, as to the implication that this influence was felt in an immediate and direct way. We believe that this influence acted upon the social formation and its political superstructures by transforming the relations of production which are its basis.

It is not possible within the limits of this article to decide whether Gyaman and Ashanti constitute particular cases or whether, on the contrary, the hypotheses which we have drawn from the examination of these two states can be applied to other social formations in West Africa. We shall therefore limit ourselves to the following observations: the importance of the role played by salt and copper in long-distance trade during the entire period from the eleventh to the sixteenth century is

well-known. At that time the mines of Teghazza provided most of the salt for the Sudan (Levtzion 1968:172). According to Ibn Batuta, who visited them, the mines were worked by slaves of the Massufa people: "Taghaza is inhabited solely by slaves of the Massufite. They work at the extraction of salt" (Ibn Batuta 1969:378). The same is true of the copper beds of Takedda, which played the same role for this metal as Teghazza did for salt. Ibn Batuta wrote: "The copper mine is situated outside Tacada. They dig it from the earth and take the ore into the town to smelt it in the houses. This task is done by slaves of both sexes" (Ibn Batuta 1969:441). It was facts of this type which allowed Fage to write the following:

> It appears that around the fourteenth century the commercial economies of the large states of western and central Sudan depended a great deal on the work of slaves. It also appears that, with the expansion of trade from the Sudanese centers, the elements of a slave economy had reached regions as far south as the Gold Coast and Benin by the beginning of the sixteenth century (Fage 1969:94).

We leave Fage the responsibility for these statements; but if it were possible — and this is something we do not know — to produce further evidence in their favor it would seem that our analysis has much wider application than to the single case of the Abron and Ashanti.

In conclusion we should like to return to a problem of method. In his *Misère de la philosophie* Marx wrote: "In general the form of trade in products corresponds to the form of production. Change the second and the former will change as a consequence" (Marx 1847:38). Thirty years later he said again in the third book of *Le capital*:

> The fixed relation of distribution only reflects the relation of production, historically defined. What one calls the relations of distribution correspond, consequently, to the specific social forms, historically determined, of the process of production. The relations which are established among men in the process of propagation of human life correspond to the relations of production and spring from them. The historical character of the relations of distribution is the historical character of the relations of production, of which they express only one aspect . . . each form of distribution vanishes with the fixed mode of production of which it is a result and to which it corresponds (Marx 1960: volume 8, pp. 257–258).

Consequently, the relations of production determine the relations of distribution, and, beyond them, all social relations. Thus a social formation can only be understood by analyzing the relations of production which make up its foundation. By thus asserting the primacy of production for the study of social reality, Marx clearly separates himself from bourgeois economics which is reluctant to disclose the true origins of profit and prefers to examine the relations of distribution. Thus, we feel that Coquery and Amin have overestimated the role of long-distance trade by studying it in isolation from the relations of production of which

it is an effect, or the reverse. We reproach them for not having recognized the primacy of production over distribution.

Of course Coquery and Amin foresaw this objection and tried to counter it. But the former rejects it, using an argument which is little more than a play on words: "Let no one reproach us with overemphasizing the mode of circulation of goods at the expense of the mode of production; the fundamental problem was not to transport goods but to obtain them — in a certain sense, to "produce" them . . ." (Coquery 1969:71). Samir Amin does not use this odd assimilation of production and trade as an argument: "Long-distance trade is clearly not a mode of production . . ." (Amin 1972:6), and he states that the effect of this commerce is to permit "the transfer — and certainly not the generation — of a fraction of one society's surplus to another" (Amin 1972:7). But he is completely silent about the conditions under which this surplus is formed. Consequently, there is some incoherence in trying to explain the political superstructures of the social formation by phenomena (control of long-distance trade, the monopoly of profit to which it gives rise) which belong exclusively to the sphere of distribution. If applied to the capitalist mode of production, Amin's method would attempt to explain the bourgeois state only in the light of relationships and antagonisms which exist between different social levels (industrial entrepreneurs, landed proprietors, capitalist merchants and financiers) which are associated in the division of surplus-value. He would completely neglect the process in which the surplus-value is created and the fundamental conflict (between the exploiters and the exploited) which arises from it.

What we have done, on the contrary, is to attempt to discover the origin of the surplus whose distribution is assured by long-distance trade. To this end we have examined the social relations which are formed in the process of production itself, and we were thus led to show the decisive importance of slave exploitation in the functioning of the social formation. The analysis of new cases will no doubt allow this conclusion to be confirmed or contested. What is clear is that the method adopted seems to be an essential tool for all researchers who see in Marx's work the fundamentals of social and historical science. For, to let Marx have the last word:

> This specific economic form in which unpaid surplus-labor is wrested from the direct producers determines the relation of dependence, in that it comes directly from production and reacts in its turn in a determining way on production. It is the basis of all forms of economic community, and comes directly from the relations of production. It is also the basis of its specific political form. It is always in the immediate connection between the proprietor of the means of production and the direct producer (a connection whose different aspects correspond naturally to a determined level of the development of methods of work, therefore to a fixed degree of social productive force) that one should seek the deepest secret, the hidden base of the whole social edifice, and consequently of the political form

which the relation of sovereignty and dependence takes; in brief, the foundation of the specific form which clothes the state at a given period (Marx 1960: volume 8, p. 172).

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"Tribal" Elite: A Base for Social Stratification in the Sudan

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Any divorce of social theories from their practical use is quite unacceptable at this stage of the development of the social sciences. These theories are the product of social relations at a certain point in time. The most relevant of them consider social change as an ongoing process and thus offer hypotheses that can be taken as guidelines for possible development. The contribution of anthropologists has been significant in this field. Through the development of certain concepts they attempted to depict the social relations and organization of the people they studied. In the process of establishing anthropology as a discipline a number of concepts were formulated and a large body of material on the different peoples from the non-European world was collected. In the analysis of this material the anthropologist, who was either a European or American, was in most cases influenced by the ideologies dominant in his own society. This led to the development of a certain attitude to the people studied and allowed for the regular use of value-loaded concepts such as "savage." This was all done within the context of colonialism. But since colonialism has declined as a major force today, the time has come to investigate the relation between the concepts developed by anthropologists and the dominant ideologies of their time. This is a difficult but urgent task which falls mainly to the non-Euro-American anthropologist working among his own people.

The difficulty derives mainly from the conservative reputation which anthropology acquired because some of its early practitioners were "hand-maidens of imperialism." To undo the disservice done by these scholars, both to the discipline and to the people studied, the new generation of anthropologists has reacted by rethinking some of the basic concepts formulated by their predecessors. The last decade has witnessed the emergence of a group of young anthropologists among the very

people who were once the main subject of study for Euro-American anthropologists. Most non-Euro-American anthropologists have developed a highly critical attitude to their discipline and have made some significant contributions to rethinking basic issues in anthropology. However, much still has to be done, both theoretically and methodologically, to set the discipline on the right course of depicting social reality and facilitating comparisons on which to base valid generalizations. Anthropologists have to make sure that their methods and contributions are acceptable to colleagues working in related fields in other countries. By this means the long-standing dilemma about the relevance of anthropology could be resolved.

When non-Euro-American anthropologists started viewing the human groups that used to be referred to as "tribes" as units integrated in a wider system consisting of similar groups within a region, the picture of the so-called "primitive" peoples or "natives" changed immensely. Such units no longer appeared as isolated islands in the wide seas of colonial empires, but as integral parts of a broader population united by similar cultural values, interests, and technological ability to exploit a particular environment. The homogeneity and continuity of such populations can be traced easily, especially when the "ethnic boundaries" are investigated critically and the channels through which values are transformed are understood. The relations between any number of such groups in a particular geographical locality cannot be understood without a thorough analysis of the larger entities to which they are related in one way or another. This means that it is necessary to add a historical dimension to our analysis, a dimension that many anthropologists have hitherto ignored.

The history of dominance within a region in which one or more groups reside is essential to our understanding of the social organization of the population of that region. These power relations within and between the groups in an area can best be investigated by trying to find out how the resources in the area are allocated. The relations within a group between the masses and the leading elite depend on the extent to which the elite controls economic resources such as land and water and political resources such as taxation and land distribution within their area. The relations between large and small population units depend on the ability of the large units to control resources throughout the whole region and make the smaller units dependent on them. In the recent history of the Sudan the elites of both small and large units have acted as representatives of the masses in relation to the central authorities in the country and have provided a bridge when communication between different units inside or outside the region was needed. Although most of the power centers have now narrowed the degree and extent of their dominance or simply disappeared, the elite groups of many units have managed to

survive traumatic changes. This has been due mainly to two basic facts: (1) the new central authority needed them as a means of contact with the population (2) the masses recognized their historical experience which the elites legitimized on the basis of descent and other ideologies.

The origin of the elite in the Sudan today can be traced back at least to the early Funj days. But recently, with the emergence of towns and with shifts in the traditional relations between urban and rural areas, the form of elite group circulation has been changing and new units are entering what used to be a closed circle. The concept of elite is therefore no longer appropriate and should be replaced by the concept of "class." Nevertheless the modern system of social stratification is profoundly influenced by the rural elite. The structure of the rural elite has also changed, especially since 1964 when the tribal elite allied itself with the merchants in order to further their mutual interests at the expense of the masses they claimed to represent.

THE CONCEPT OF "TRIBE" RECONSIDERED

The debate about "the indices used in the study of social change in colonial Africa" started by Magubane (1971) and joined by some of those involved in such studies (e.g. Mitchell 1971 and Epstein 1971) brought to light many points which seemed to have been overlooked until then. It emphasized the importance of keeping in mind that many of the concepts used in the study of both rural and urban communities in Africa had been developed in the colonial era, and that this imposed certain constraints both on the anthropologists and on the people whom they studied. Elsewhere, it has been stated explicitly that the anthropologists involved in the area "took the colonial situation as an existential fact and sought the explanation of African behaviour within that context" (Mitchell 1971:435). They did not attach any significance to the fact that the colonial situation was one of enforced subordination and that it was in this light that the values and images to which Africans "aspired" should be judged before being accepted as genuine (Magubane 1971:428).

It is equally important to reconsider the concept of "tribalism" in rural areas. Many anthropologists who were aware of the difficulties involved in using this concept tried to find ways of refining it, while others tried to avoid the issue altogether. Examples of both of these approaches are to be found in the collections of essays edited by Helm (1968), Gulliver (1969), and Gutkind (1970). In almost all these essays the definition of "tribe" is a basic problem and one that is never solved. The word "tribe," following the definition with which Lewis starts his article on "tribal

society" in the *International Encyclopedia of Social Science* (1968:146) "is taken to denote a primary aggregate of people living in a primitive or barbarous condition under a headman or chief." In other words, they adopted the Oxford Dictionary definition. But in the process of elaborating their argument they had to make certain modifications and introduce additional variables to make this definition widely applicable. Kinship, language, and territorial boundaries are some of the additional variables introduced in many of these essays.

Though they found that the definition, even with these modifications and specifications, was not generally applicable, and that the exceptions were more numerous than the supporting cases (Lewis 1968), these Euro-American anthropologists still insisted on using it in a way that made some of the non-Euro-American anthropologists suspicious of their motives. Because of their cultural and social background these Euro-American anthropologists appeared to be making a value judgement which emphasized the moralistic overtones of the concept of "tribe," despite their constant apologies for using the term. In this connection the contribution of Mair (1962) is worth mentioning, not because she clarified the point but because the conclusions she reached are good illustrations of how the cultural heritage of an anthropologist can influence her analysis. Mair suggested that since the term "tribe" is an indispensable part of the official language of countries under European domination, it is therefore a convenient technical term for anthropologists to use. At the same time she suggested that some of the peoples who are referred to as tribes "could be called nations," but in her own work she denies them that right. With such suggestions dominating the analysis of the politics of African populations until quite recently, one cannot help sympathizing with Davidson when he says:

> Such mystification, one cannot help feeling, is in no small part the fault of anthropologists who have generally cultivated a habit, when writing about African societies, of creeping in at the back door of political reality instead of marching boldly up the front steps (Davidson 1964:22).

But the future of anthropology is not as dim as many of those who are engaged in African studies would suggest. New attempts to reevaluate the concepts and to shift the emphasis of anthropological studies to new fields have been made in recent years. Mafeje's article on the ideology of tribalism laid the foundation for rethinking the fundamental issues on which the concept of tribe is based. He directly related the whole issue to European colonialism:

> It is usually argued that social behaviour in Africa is so diverse, so inconsistent, and so fluid that it is nigh impossible to classify or treat it with any amount of consistency. I am inclined to think that the problem in Africa is not one of

empirically diversified behaviour but mainly one of *ideology*, and specifically the ideology of "tribalism". European colonialism, like any epoch, brought with it certain ways of reconstructing the African reality. It regarded African societies as particularly tribal (1971:253).

Arguing along similar lines, Talal Asad, writing about inequality in the structure of the Kababish nomads of the Sudan, illustrated the ideological significance of the concept of tribe. He started with the fact that

> . . . very few anthropologists have tried to identify the *ideological* significance of the concept of tribe or its equivalents — i.e. its significance as a concept which, besides representing a collective identity, aspiration, and way of life, has the quality of masking divisions, contradictions of interest, forms of exploitation and conflicting modes of social experience (1972:127).

He then proceeded to show that inequality cannot be explained without a critical appraisal of the concept that helps to maintain it. He directed his criticism at:

> . . . three targets which are connected in a triangular relationship of mutual confirmation — the colonial administration, the Kababish, and the anthropologist. For the first, "the tribe" as an administrative convenience represented a unit of authentic interest, regulated but not shaped by the colonial government. For the second, "the tribe" as an experience of structured inequality appeared as part of a just and natural world of rulers and ruled. For the third, "the tribe" as a theoretical construct for approaching the problem of political domination was ultimately based on specific assumptions about the nature of man, assumptions which he shared with the colonial administrators to the extent that both participated in a common cultural tradition. The first helped to create, the second to maintain, and the third to validate the structure of inequality which was the tribe (Asad 1972:128).

Since I find myself in agreement with both Mafeje's and Asad's arguments, I shall start from the fact that inequality in the structure of most of the ethnic units in the Sudan has a long history extending back long before the Anglo-Egyptian condominium. Many of these units have been under the domination of centralized authority since the fourteenth century. Their relation with the central power required that they develop some form of representation and this led to the creation of dominant groups within these units. One important point which I would like to clarify before demonstrating what I mean by relation between ethnic units and the central authority is the significance of the word *gabila* which is used to refer to these ethnic units. This term is usually translated as "tribe" and is thought to be equivalent to the classical Arabic word. Lane (1893:2984) gives the translation of *gabila* as "a body of men from several ancestors." In fact, in classical Arabic *gabil* generally means "kind." But in the Sudan, although the majority of the population in the *gabila* may share

the characteristics generally included in the definition of the term "tribe," a considerable number of other people are also included. The study of people after people has shown that the number of persons of this type is large and that in most cases they have particular effects on the social and political organization of the unit in question. Evans-Pritchard's study of the Nuer (1940) was one of the earliest studies to account for the presence of such persons. In my own work on the Rufa'a al-Hoi (M. Ahmed 1971, 1972a) I discussed the role of the non-Rufa'a al-Hoi who are attached to the group.

These people who are marginal in relation to the units occupying a region do not remain in one territory for a long time. They shift from place to place as pursuit of their interests demands and always attach themselves to the dominant unit in each territory into which they move. Since they are not genealogically related to these units they pose a serious problem for those who insist that kinship is a major factor in the definition of "tribe." In most cases they make up genealogies in order to identify themselves with the dominant unit and hence justify their right to use the resources in the area. Even when it comes to culture and language, most of these marginal populations are able to adopt the customs and values of more than one unit in the regions where they move; and in many cases they are bilingual.

Because of the lack of "written" historical materials among most of the African populations studied by anthropologists and the attitudes to the use of history developed under the influence of Radcliffe-Brown, anthropologists have concentrated on synchronic studies which treat people as if their lives began at the moment when the anthropologist visited them. The effect of the time dimension is never investigated and is taken to have little or no significance in the life of such populations. However, a few studies have managed to make a breakthrough in this field by placing more emphasis on kinship and oral history. Kinship, when used to explain the relationships between the ancestors of the people who are interacting in one region can be regarded as a type of history. Histories of this kind "are about relationships between people whose representatives are alive today, and these relationships centre in the ownership of land" (Cunnison 1951:42) — or any other resource essential for such a population. If these histories can be constructed, they may help to explain the relations among the population in a region before colonial domination.

Instead of treating populations as "tribes" formed on the basis of kinship and the occupation of a territory, it would be more useful to shift the emphasis to the relationships which govern the allocation and use of the resources in the area. It is important to understand how the individuals and groups in the region compete, at what level their interests conflict, and what kinds of alternative opportunities are open to them. This gives a clearer picture of how they organize themselves. It is the kind of unit that

emerges from these types of relations — including kinship relations — that is important. This approach may appear somewhat similar to Barth's in his introduction to *Ethnic groups and boundaries* (1969), but the emphasis is different. My intention is to focus on the center rather than the boundaries since that is where power originates. On the periphery, where central power starts fading, vaguer, more customary boundaries or borderlines between units may become evident.

In the case of the Sudan, I suggest that the way different units are organized can be seen to follow a simple pattern. The process seems to be as follows: in each region there is a power center — a camp or a village — the basic core of whose population may trace descent from a common ancestor and claim rights over resources in the surrounding area. This center attracts followers who may appear to be at both a social and physical distance from the core of the center; their relations with it are relative to these distances. Some of these people, obviously the closer ones, can trace common descent or affinal relations. Others who are further removed might *claim* such relations in order to benefit from being allied to the power center. Between any two or more power centers in a region there are marginal people who are willing to shift their alliances according to the benefits they expect to gain. Thus any population in a region is not divided as the concept of "tribe" would suggest. The boundaries assumed in the concept are not fully justified. The leading member or members of the power center represent the population attached to them in their contacts with the central authority in the country and with the other power centers. Historically, this process seems to have occurred with many dominant groups in the Sudan. A further example is given by O'Fahey and Spaulding, dealing with the period before colonial domination. They suggest that:

> the use of "tribal" names as if they had a meaning constant through time and common to all those who employed the terms has been a source of ambiguity in the discussion of Sudanese history. In our chosen period of the history of Kordofan, the name "Musabba'at" had three distinguishable meanings. First, the term referred to an agnatically related group, originating in Dar Fur and linked to the Keira royal dynasty there. A second group included in the term were supporters of the first who probably came to relate themselves putatively to the ruling clan. Finally, the political supporters of the first two groups, whatever their self-defined identity, were also known as "Musabba'at," particularly to distant or poorly informed observers (O'Fahey and Spaulding 1972:318).

In the history of the central Sudan such units appeared frequently. The Abdallab and the Funj exemplified the process best. Such units usually disappeared when the power center was destroyed and the core of the dominant unit could no longer protect the rights of its followers to resources in the area. The whole group might then lose its identity and the

population attached to it move away and establish new relations with other existing or newly emerging power centers. As to the processes through which new power centers in a region emerged, Newcomer (1972) put forward a reasonable hypothesis. Reconstructing Nuer-Dinka relations from the available ethnographic material he hypothesized that the Nuer had actually emerged from the Dinka group. The nuclear unit for the Nuer may possibly have been a small Dinka group that "developed a social mutation which works like Sahlins' conception of the segmentary lineage (Sahlins 1961), that is, as an adaptation for predatory expansion" (Newcomer 1972:7).

In the light of the historical material available on the states of Sinnar and Dar Fur, we notice that with the decline of power at the center, new units emerged and established dominance at the points where they felt secure, e.g. northern Sudan or Kordofan. Another case of a group holding power at the center extending its dominance and even destroying small power centers that stood against its wishes can be seen in the relation of the Mahdist state to the Shukriyya, the Kabbabish, and the Rufa'a al-Hoi. This disagreement led to the violent destruction of the small power centers. But later the unity of the Mahdist state itself started to disintegrate and power centers, based on loyalty to leading families and older, underlying regional power centers, began to grow again. Supporters with special interests in the existence of one unit or another managed to cross the lines between these fragmented power centers easily and there appear to have been continuous shifts of alliances.

At present, most of the units recognized by the government as "tribes" include a number of people whose relation corresponds to the relation suggested above. My own work among the Rufa'a al-Hoi nomads has shown that individuals as well as camps that genealogically belong to groups outside the region are included in the Rufa'a al-Hoi organization (M. Ahmed 1972a, 1972b).

The concept of "tribe" in its standard definition cannot easily be made to fit the present units of population in various parts of central Sudan. It was part of the colonial policy in the Sudan to stabilize the existing power centers and even to draw on historical tradition and cultural heritage to build new units. When this was done the colonial rulers tried to set physical boundaries for these units in terms of the concept of *dar* [home]. The major goal of the colonial power was to pacify the different groups and to make sure that no leader could emerge to lead a revolt on the national level. The possibility of national integration was thus hindered, and discontent and struggle against the colonial power were diverted. The colonial administrators in Africa as a whole had in mind

how formidable Zululand and Ruanda had proved that Africans could be once they merged their tribalism in large entities — the Mahdi and his largely Negro or

Arab-Negro army of Fuzzy-Wuzzies in the Sudan were not forgotten (Kiernan 1969:247).

The concept of "tribe" as employed in anthropological studies was a creation of the colonial administration, which anthropologists helped to validate. But now that colonial domination has disappeared from most parts of Africa the constraints which the concept placed on the anthropologist need no longer exist.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF HISTORICAL EVENTS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ELITE GROUPS IN THE SUDAN

The best documented part of the history of the Sudan started at the beginning of the fourteenth century. The process of power center creation led to the establishment of a dominant central authority that spread its power over most of the area included today in the central part of the Democratic Republic of the Sudan. The external influence that came with the Arab invasion and the process of Islamization of a major part of the population of the region introduced new administrative and cultural means for enforcing the central power dominance.

The small power centers used their core to represent the masses in their dealings with the central power. These elites managed to extract certain advantages for themselves from their position by diverting part of the tax revenue to their own use or giving most of the productive land to their closest relatives and those whose support was considered most necessary at a particular moment.

Among the sedentary population of the central Sudan two types of elite groups can be distinguished: the religious elite and those who based their claim on political and economic resources only. In the early days of the Funj state the religious elite was the most dominant among the sedentary population and influenced the nomadic people as well for some time. Later, this section of the elite declined and the merchants rose in their place. This came with the growth of trade throughout the region and the establishment of trade routes north to Egypt and east across the Red Sea to Arabia. The religious elite had economic as well as religious power and managed at the appropriate time to develop political power by acting as mediators. Toward the end of Funj rule the number of religious factions increased leading to conflicts of interest among their leaders and a lack of effective support for the central authority. The Funj king tended to depend more and more on the merchants for support; and with the growth of trade this proved to be very effective. The dominance of merchants continued under Turkish rule as well.

Another major elite group consisted of the leading families among the

nomads. This elite based its claim to leadership on the ideology of patrilineal descent and the belief that its ancestors had brought the Arab masses under central control during Funj rule. Under Turkish rule in the Sudan, the nomadic elite was chosen by the central administration to collect taxes and solve minor conflicts between the different groups under its control.

During both Funj and Turkish rule the religious leaders, the merchants, and the leading nomad families represented an upper stratum of the population of the central Sudan. The interests of these groups sometimes coincided and this disposed them to support the central authority since things were going well enough; sometimes they conflicted and this led them to rebel against the central authority and its supporters since the center was perceived not to be (or was in fact not) functioning so as to ensure peace and prosperity for the area at large. The policies of the central authority played a major role in the stability of relations between these groups. The reglious elite and the big merchants acquired semi-feudal characteristics during Funj rule because they were allowed to control cultivable lands on the bank of the Nile. Their rights to land were granted and upheld by the state. Among the nomads land was regarded as communal property.

The Mahdist revolution was a reaction to the policies of the Turkish government (see Holt 1958) and changed the existing system in almost all spheres, economic, political, and religious. It advocated a return to Islamic ideology both at the level of beliefs and in the structure of the state. This led to a shift in the positions of the different elite groups. Those elites which had supported the Turkish administration or later rejected the dominance of the Mahdist leaders were deprived of power and their members were often killed. Since Mahdism was opposed to all religious factions, the religious elites either had to practice the teachings of the Mahdi or cease functioning as religious leaders. This led to a weakening of their position and the disappearance of their fields of dominance. The merchants' business declined for some time, and they no longer wielded power over the population of their regions or had any influence over the central administration. The role played by the leading nomad families was taken over by appointed administrators chosen by the Khalifa of the Mahdi.

Thus for almost thirteen years the elite groups which had been dominant for more than three centuries were powerless. The masses lost their traditional form of representation and had to seek alternative forms in a newly established system which they did not understand. The reasons for the decline of the Mahdist state are complex and difficult to explain. But in general the role of the traditional elite in this decline should not be ignored. In the latter days of Mahdist rule the traditional elites had been superseded by a new kind of central authority that tried to integrate the

whole country in a unitary system, without the assistance of mediating groups (i.e. the traditional elite). At this point the traditional elites were ready to welcome any change that would bring back their small power centers.

Thus we find that the traditional elite rather than the masses were the first to support the condominium. From the beginning their power positions were restored and new ones were created. The government sought their support and used them to establish its system of administration. The leading families among the nomads gained greatly through the establishment of government positions where they were either paid salaries or allowed to keep a percentage of the taxes they were asked to collect. They were also given control over the allocation of certain economic resources such as land and gum trees (M. Ahmed 1972b). The merchants started gradually to gain economic power among the sedentary population as trade began to flourish in different regions. They were able to convert this economic power and dominance over the villagers into political power when a local government system was established and they had a chance to share power in the local councils with the leading nomad families. The religious leaders (although they were allowed to practice their teachings) were kept under control so that none of them could lead a revolution similar to the Mahdist one.

Through all the traumatic events in the history of the central Sudan we find that the elite groups managed to survive. The changes in their structure were minor and there seems to have been no circulation among the leading nomad families and little circulation among the merchants and the religious elite.

THE ORIGIN OF THE MODERN ELITE

Administrative and trading centers in the central Sudan started to grow rapidly after 1900 bringing together a large number of people with different ethnic backgrounds and values. At the same time a number of jobs and minor industries were established by the new administration and access to them did not require the mediation of the traditional elite. Such jobs were low-paid and were taken up by people who were still on the bottom steps of the stratification pyramid. In northern Sudan, in order to get qualified workers to fill important jobs needed for the future development of the region and to get a local staff for administrative purposes, the government had to establish schools. In the southern part of the Sudan, education was left in the hands of mission stations. One important feature of the new schools, whether they were run by the government or by the missions, was that they attracted the sons of the leading nomad families and the merchants, and to a lesser extent, the sons

of religious men. In many cases the population of the Sudan did not accept the new educational system which differed from the traditional one that they were used to (i.e. the Koranic schools). The government had to force people to send their children to the new schools, and it needed the help of the traditional elites to encourage the masses. The elite groups had to set an example by sending their own children to these schools. It must be emphasized here that the future role of the educated groups was neither apparent to nor planned by the Sudanese people. The government needed local administrative staff since its attempts to import Egyptians had either failed or led to unrest at certain times and in certain parts of the country. It was feared, especially after the revolt by Sudanese officers of the Sudan Defence Force in 1924, that any increase in the numbers of Egyptian staff might help the groups advocating the unity of the Nile Valley to gain political support and lead to an uprising. One might have expected to see a development similar to the one which occurred in East Africa (of bringing in Asians) taking place, but the relative uniformity of the population of the Sudan and their historical experience seems to have prevented this happening.

Therefore, by the early 1940's a high proportion of the new urban elite, especially in the administration, was closely related to the traditional elite. Future developments in world politics, and consequently the political development of the Sudan, gave the urban elite the chance to lead the country to independence. To consolidate its political power, the urban elite looked to the rural population for support. One easy way to get it was by manipulating its links with the traditional elite. Evidence of this practice can be found in the electoral process; members of the urban elite who stood for election outside the towns stood in what they claimed to be their "home areas." At the same time, members of the rural or traditional elites acted as representatives for their "sons" — the urban elites — by standing in their own areas for the political party of the "sons."

CHANGES IN THE POSITION OF THE ELITE

The recent economic development of the Sudan and the expansion of the educational system have led to a widening of the urban elite's base. Moreover, the masses of the rural population, whether nomadic or sedentary, had some chance to send their children to schools located in their own areas. Earlier, the only schools had been in big towns such as Khartoum, Omdurman, and El-Obeid, and sending a child to one of them meant sacrificing an active member of the productive unit — usually the family. The growth in the number of such educated individuals led to increasing criticism of elite dominance. These educated people started explaining to the masses of their groups that patrilineal ideology and

historical experience are not enough to justify the dominance of a very small group over such wide areas and such a large population. Moreover, in representing the masses, the elite were making financial gains which the masses did not know about and were not given a chance to know about. Also, the elite, whether merchants, leading nomad families, or religious men, were serving their own mutual interests at the expense of the masses.

The efforts of these educated individuals in rural areas brought about some change in 1964 — following the success of the revolution against the military regime. The masses in the rural areas supported the plans of the National Front to abolish the native administration system, the locus of the major part of the rural elite's power (for a detailed description of the role of the National Front see M. Ahmed 1971).

FROM ELITE TO CLASS

The concept of "elite" used in this paper has been based on the classical elitists' definitions (see Bottomore 1964) and on the definition given by Nadel (1956). It is true that under Funj rule, Turkish rule, the Mahdist state, and the early days of Anglo-Egyptian rule, small elite groups used a variety of means to dominate the entire population. The acceptance of such dominance is best analyzed in Asad's work on the Kababish (1972), and I think that his arguments hold for most of the nomadic Arab groups in the Sudan.

When we relate the ideological bases of dominance in rural areas to the development of politics and organizations in urban areas of the Sudan, we find that traditionally the elites were recruited from very narrow bases. Recently, however, the elite groups have had to broaden their bases both among the sedentary rural population and in urban areas, and in so doing they have become open to individuals who, traditionally, had no access to positions of power and authority. This situation is gradually leading to the creation of more sharply defined social strata and suggests that a clear process of class formation is taking place. The upper class, as we have shown, has its roots in the rural elite. One can conclude from this discussion that the elites which developed over the past three centuries form the nucleus of the stratification system existing in the present-day Sudan.

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Feudalism in Nigeria

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THE PROBLEM

This paper is divided into two sections. The first describes the feudal system in Nigeria prior to colonial conquest. The second discusses the transformation of Nigeria's feudal societies into capitalist societies, showing how urbanization and capitalism together had the effect of transforming the old feudal economy based on slavery, tribute, taxes, tolls, and forced labor, into a new monetary economy. In the new economy, the emerging bourgeoisie snatched power from the feudal class, married into it, and transformed the traditional feudal economic values into capitalist values. The descendants of the royal ruling houses became participants in the new economy.

Nigeria had the largest cluster of feudal kingdoms in Africa. In the north were the Hausa-Fulani kingdoms, and the Nupe and Igala kingdoms. In the southwest were the Yoruba kingdoms; in the middlewest the Benin-Edo kingdoms, and the Jeki and Igbo chiefdoms; and in the southeast were the pockets of Igbo city states along the River Niger.

These feudal societies have been studied by a number of social anthropologists, and the present paper draws extensively on the work of M. G. Smith (1960) on the Zazzau; R. Cohen (1967) on the Bornu; S. F. Nadel (1942) on the Kede and the Nupe; N. A. Fadipe (1970), P. C. Lloyd (1960) and S. Johnson (1960) on the Yoruba; R. E. Bradbury (1952) and A. Ryder (1969) on the Benin; and I. Nzimiro (1972) on the Niger kingdoms. The treatment of each cluster of kingdoms concentrates on setting forth the traditional patterns of their society as they were before the coming of the Europeans. Only the Hausa-Fulani, Yoruba, and Benin kingdoms will be considered; limitations of space will not permit the inclusion of others.

Nigeria is the largest country in Africa. Its population and ethnic configurations are as complex as its size. The bulk of its population is found within the boundaries of the former feudal kingdoms. The country can be grouped into two social clusters — the feudal-dominated cluster and the nonfeudal cluster, representing also two conflicting types of political personality. This is the basic internal problem that has confronted the country following independence.

THE NORTHERN FEUDAL BELT

Historical Evolution

Northern Nigeria covers an area of approximately 284,579 square miles with a population roughly estimated at over 30 million. Before independence it consisted of 13 provinces grouped into one semi-autonomous region dominated by the Northern People's Congress. Today it is split into six states.

The dominant ethnic groups are the Hausa who are found in five of the six states, the Fulani who are found in four, and the Nupe who are also found in four. While these three ethnic groups dominate the north, it should be remembered that the entire north has more than 40 ethnic groups.

Several of the 13 former provinces derived their names from the major feudal states, for example, Sokoto, Kano, Bornu, Zaria, Ilorin, and Katsina. These were the seats of the feudal kingdoms, and within each province were subdivisions of other small emirates. The emirate system dominated the political structure of northern Nigeria, and its configuration continues to exist within the present state system.

The history of feudalism in Nigeria can be divided into four periods with distinctive characteristics: (1) the period which might be termed the distant past, relating to the myth of the founder of the kingdom who settled at a particular place; (2) a period of disturbances when the founder and his people began a series of conquests, characterized by migration following wars, and the absorption of the conquered people; (3) the period of consolidation; and (4) the period of expansion into distant lands in order to enlarge the empire (Nzimiro 1972:6).

The modern history of these feudal societies began with the period of European conquest and colonialism. The entire kingdom was disrupted in the attempt to resist the colonial power; the latter possessing better weapons of war, conquered the kingdom and then, after subduing it, utilized its feudal system and certain key officials, to maintain imperial domination. At this point, particular functions of the system were redefined.

Two outstanding encroachments characterized the history of the northern feudal kingdoms. The first was the Fulani conquest; Fulani influence dated as far back as the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries and erupted in the 1802 jihad led by Othman dan Fodio; the Fulani ultimately absorbed the Habe dynasties and redefined the base of political power. The second encroachment was the British conquest and absorption of the Fulani rulers. The British, utilized the Fulani rulers and the system they had created from the Habe dynasties for their own (British) colonial ends.

Origin of the State

The feudal kingdoms in the north have a myth concerning their origin. The common myth of origin, as Smith explains,

> . . . relates to the westward flight of one Bayajida from Bagdad to Bornu. The Mai of Bornu gave Bayajida his daughter, the Magira, as a wife, but deprived him of his followers. Bayajida fled west in fear of the Mai, leaving his wife at Biromta Babas to bear him a son. At Gaya near Kano, he met some goldsmiths who made him a knife at his direction. Further north he came to a town whose people were deprived of access to water by a great snake known as Karki [chief]. He slew the snake with his sword and watered his thirsty mouth. In reward, the queen of the village, Daura, married him, and also gave him a concubine. By Daura, Bayajida had a son called Bawo and another called Kabogari [town seizer] by the concubine. He ruled Daura's people until he died, and was succeeded by Bawo. Bawo in turn had six sons, three sets of twins, who became rulers of Kano, Katsinc and Zazzau [Zaria], Gobir, and Daura. With Biram, which was ruled by Bayajida issue born of the Bornu princess, these six states formed the Hausa bakwai, the seven Hausa states.
>
> Kabogani's issue also established another seven states namely, Kebbi, Zamfara, Gwari [Birnin Gwari], Jukum, Yuruba [Oyo] Nupe and Yauri. These latter formed the banza bakwai, the bastard, northern non-Hausa states (Smith 1964:340).

This is the myth by which the northern kingdoms validated their history.

Each of the kingdoms has a different myth trying to identify itself with a founder. What actually happened was that in the distant past there were various ethnic groups settled in particular areas. They were in constant conflict with each other, and they formed separate chiefdoms according to the power and influence of individuals of families that were able to impose their domination on weaker groups. Intermittent struggles occurred, and as time went on the groups which were better organized militarily overran those that had more primitive military systems and absorbed them into their own kingdoms.

None of the Hausa chiefdoms was culturally homogeneous. Each was a conglomeration of various cultural units. The small chiefdoms were separated from each other by forests, but they established contact through trade and warfare. Their struggles resulted in the absorption of the weaker chiefdoms, which gradually became vassal states of the stronger ones.

The entire Hausa society was therefore in a state of flux at its formative stage, and the population became gradually stratified into various orders. The most powerful lineage supplied the ruler or king, who distributed offices among his followers and designated overlords within his territory. These officials were answerable to him and became his nobles and swore oaths of fealty to him, in return for which he gave them protection through the military system in which they served as his generals, defend-

ing his kingdom as well as expanding it through war and conquest. The conquered groups had to pay tribute which was collected by the king's officials; those who could not pay the tribute migrated outside the area and formed new chiefdoms. Certain of these migratory societies moved westward, incorporating other groups and forming new chiefdoms, and lost their Hausa cultural identity, but others preserved it (Smith 1964:340). The *Banza Bakwai*[1] states, according to Smith, must have developed in this way over the centuries, and Zamfara, Bornu Gwari, Kuyambara, and Yain are other examples of this development (Smith 1964:343). The stable Hausa chiefdoms emerged over a long period of time. Constant feudal wars led to their expansion and helped to spread Hausa culture throughout large areas of northern Nigeria.

At this early stage the chiefdoms were small, as compared with the later emirates. Distinctive rank orders began to emerge and the royal dynasties and the nobility formed a leisure class which began to assume great importance in the affairs of the kingdom. The rest of the society was gradually made subordinate to this ruling class and emerged as the economic mainstay of the developing Hausa feudal states. Further stratification among the common people gradually evolved because of the complexities of the economic services that developed in the society itself. Free peasants, serfs, and slaves began to emerge as substrata within the laboring class.

This was followed by a system of occupational grouping involving the peasants, as their crafts came under the control of the kings and the nobility. Society was ranked again according to occupation, and craft organization crystallized as a distinctive feature of all Hausa feudal states.

Smith explains that the *formative* period of Hausa history really ended in 1350, a year after Yaji began to reign at Kano. By then all the main Hausa states had been established (Smith 1964:345). The period of *political transformation* began about 1350 and extended through 1550. This period was marked by the introduction and incorporation of Islamic values by various strata of the society. During this period the leisure class institutionalized its dependence upon the economic resources of the lower classes.

General Characteristics of the Kingdoms

As already stated, the kingdoms evolved into large territorial units; the capitals were centers of political activity and the residence of the kings, and "nobles" or administrative personnel.

Each kingdom was divided into administrative units or fiefs and placed under the command of vassal lords, whose representatives acted as over-

[1] The original states derived from the descendents of the mythical Charter of Boyagida. the founder of the original Habe States.

seers in them. The respective capitals depended on the resources derived from the peasants and slaves in their fiefdoms. Political power emanated from the capital, where the ruling officials made laws that were enforced all over the kingdom. Autonomy was given to the districts or fiefdoms only as long as they were obedient to the king and the ruling aristocracy, under whose suzerainty they remained.

THE KINGS. The kings were absolute and autocratic. They were known as emirs and their kingdoms as emirates. The kings derived their office from the dynastic groups of the first Fulani rulers who ousted the Habe rulers after the successful jihad of Othman dan Fodio in 1802. These dynastic groups were split into various ruling circles.

The methods of succession were defined by the custom in each emirate. In most of them, however, primogeniture did not apply, and the office of king became competitive. This led to cutthroat rivalry among the dynastic competitors for the throne. The Fulani who inherited this system from the Habes took advantage of it to make all appointments political; those appointed by the king were expected to support him and his dynastic group. This strategem strengthened the position of the officials while in office, and ensured that the will of the king was effectively executed. A prebend system and patrimony prevailed. To retain an office

> . . . its holder had two commitments; the first was loyalty to the king, and his allegiance was demonstrated by gifts and obedience; the official had to execute the king's instructions efficiently and properly, to collect the required tax, tributes, military levies and to discharge the various routine tasks appertaining to the office (Smith 1960:106).

THE HIERARCHY OF OFFICIALS. The offices of the state varied. They were hierarchically graded into several orders. Smith shows that in the Habe dynasty, at Abuja, the offices were graded into what he calls "the public order," "the household order," and "slave officials," all of whom performed military duties. Within each of these orders there were also civil offices — nine in the public order, nine in the household order, and eight in the order of slave officials (Smith 1960:46).

In Fulani Zazzau, the same principle of hierarchical ranking applied. There were royal officials grouped into two grades: the *yan sarki*, the sons of the kings, eligible for promotion to the throne; and the *jikikin sarki*, the grandsons of the kings, not eligible for promotion to the throne. Together they constituted the royal branch of the aristocracy, although the claim to royalty was more direct in the first group than in the second. They all, of course, held royal offices — six in the first category and seven in the second.

Another order of officials was that of the vassal officials. They were grouped into three grades: the first grade, comprised of four officials, was supervised by an official called the *madaki*; the second group, made up of

three officials, was supervised by an official called the *makami*; and the third grade, made up of four officials, was supervised by the king himself.

A third order was the client officials. These were grouped into two grades: ten freely appointive nonhereditary officials the last seven of whom were under the control of an official called the *waziri*; and ten quasi-hereditary officials. There was another order, the *mallams* [religious teachers], made up of two grades: the first six offices in these grades were not attached to the household offices.

The four categories of officials — the royal officials, the vassal officials, the client officials, and the order of *mallams* — constituted the ruling aristocracy. Two other officials were created among the commoners.

Occupationally ranked offices. As has been explained, the common people supplied labor and skill for the service of the king and the nobility. They were organized into craft guilds on the basis of occupation, with leaders upon whom specific titles were conferred. There were fourteen such titled officials, representing the various craft organizations — butchers, blacksmiths, silversmiths, leather workers, weavers, brokers, sellers, drummers, potters, builders, dyebeaters, musket makers, eulogists, and prostitutes.

Slave officials. Those without fiefs were grouped into four categories as follows: three eunuchs, ten military, five civil, and two police. Those with fiefs were five in number.

FIEFDOM. The hierarchical nature of the administration represented a well-defined structural order which the king manipulated to his advantage. The assignment of duties to the various officials enabled the administration to function effectively. On receipt of their honorific titles embodying the duties of office, the recipients swore an oath of fealty to the king to administer their areas to his satisfaction.

In some areas, the officials appointed were from particular lineages and were stationed in their fiefs; other officials remained in the capital and visited their fiefs annually to collect taxes. The power of the king to appoint was not restricted to particular lineages, even though convention might encourage such practice. The officials who resided in the capital were the most senior and had subordinates within their territorial orbits. The entire feudal system was a huge bureaucratic network governed by the principles of prebend and patrimony.

CLIENTAGE. Fiefdom implied a form of clientage. The society was organized in terms of individual subordination and supraordination. This principle ensured that no one was without a patron to whom he could attach

himself for protection; and in return, the client rendered his master certain services.

Studies in Abuja, Bornu, Nupe, and Igala have revealed the pattern described above. Northern feudalism was therefore conterminous with the clientage system.

RULING CLASS AND COMMONERS. The entire society, hierarchically demarcated, was split into two social ranks, the ruling class — the *isarakim,* and the commoners — *talakawa*. The ruling class consisted of those who held vital offices in the state, graded into various groups such as household and civil officials, hereditary and nonhereditary officials and royal officials who occupied higher status in the upper segment of the system.

The rest of the people fell into the *talakawa* class, which was made up of the peasants, serfs, and the most debased class, the slaves.

The commoners were the backbone of the feudal economy. Peasant production was expropriated through tribute, taxes, special levies, and forced labor. Forced labor implied that the peasants could be compelled to work on the farms of the lords under whom they sought protection. Since these lords were subordinate to the king, the feudal kings shared with the lords rights over the peasants' labor on their farms. The king had authority over boundary disputes within the kingdom, while the officials in the villages (the village chiefs) heard cases of land disputes within their communities. The kings purchased slaves who had to work for them on the farms (Smith 1960:2).

The greatest sources of income for the king and the nobles were, then, tribute, taxation, levies, and forced labor service. These were characteristic features of the entire northern cluster of feudal states, as they are of all feudal societies. The fief holder was responsible to the king for the maintenance of order within his fiefs; for the observance of the Mohammedan Law, religion and custom; for the collection of tax, tribute, labor material and military forces as required for the maintenance of public buildings, town walls, mosque, market, caravan routes within his area; and to ensure effective local policing.

YORUBA FEUDALISM

Historical Evolution

The Yorubas conceptualize their feudal society in terms of a general myth, the myth of Oduduwa, believed to be the founder of the Yoruba kingdoms. Oduduwa, we are told, descended from the sky at a spot in Ile Ife, and there he created mankind, the white and the black. Another version asserts that he had sixteen children (*sons*, for this is a patrilineal

society), who were the founders of the various Yoruba kingdoms (Fadipe 1970).

There are many theories about the origin of the Yorubas, and missionaries such as Samuel Adjai Crowther, historians as different as the Sultan Bello and Dr. S. Johnson, anthropologists like Leo Frobenius, and explorers like Hugh Clapperton ascribe varying origins to these people. All point, however, to one fact — that the Yorubas (at least the conquering group) migrated to their present territory from the Far East through the Sudan; they descended southward to Oyo and into Ife, where Ododudwa settled and dispersed his chiefs, who became the founders of the different kingdoms (Nzimiro 1961).

The Yoruba myth of origin conforms to the general pattern of a feudal society, building its historical origin around a mythical hero who was a great warrior and founder of the kingdom. Such a myth is propagated by the ruling aristocracy to justify the established system, and acceptance is forced on the conquered or commoner class. The myth is justified by postulating a supernatural deity, and is perpetuated in some of the rituals of kingship. There is no doubt that there were people who traditionally inhabited these kingdoms, and that a wave of conquerors descended on them, incorporated the existing autochthonous groups into a new social structure, and imposed their political institutions on them. Other groups joined the new nucleus and the community began to expand; as the consolidation stage was reached, another phase of expansion began with the conquest of outlying areas through raids and wars. The area of consolidation became the center, where the king, the members of the royal lineage, and the ruling aristocracy settled, and the peripheral and outlying districts became incorporated around the center. As Yoruba society was disturbed by these internal conflicts, the weaker kinship groups looked to the stronger ones for protection.

As Johnson explains, this pattern of clientage became widespread:

> As soon as houses began to spring up or a hamlet was founded the necessity for order and control became apparent. The men would therefore assemble at the gate of the principal man who had attracted the people to the place and formally recognize him as the *Bale* or the Mayor of the village [literally the founder of the land] and thenceforth the mayorality became perpetuated in his family with a member of the family either the son or the brother or cousin in perpetuity (Johnson 1960:90).

Johnson's version of the origin of Yoruba chieftancy at the village level emphasizes the principle of royalty, for the society was always divided into two strata — the royal and the nonroyal groups. The *bale*, the chief of the village, looked up to a higher power above him, and placed his village under this higher chief. Groups of villages came under the authority of a chief, who, in turn, was under the authority of an *oba* [king]. Where some

chiefs tried to retain their power within their own area, a sort of confederate state emerged, as in the case of the Ekiti system. In other cases, an *oba* was the controller of a large kingdom and the subordinate towns and villages looked to him for protection.

The initial city, created as a result of the early conquest, became the focus of the kingdom, which now incorporated the numerous towns and villages within its territory. By this process, the areas of the Yoruba kingdoms were defined. Some of the subordinate towns in these kingdoms claimed in their myths that their founders came from the capital city, while others claimed that they had been there before the conquest and that their heads were *obas* before the coming of the new conquering group (Lloyd 1960:196).

The Yoruba *obas*, in order to justify the mythology of Ododuwa, claim either to be his descendants, or to have derived their powers from him. The divine nature ascribed to Ododuwa transcends and encompasses the mythical claims of all the Yoruba *obas*. This myth and the ritual practices associated with it endow the office with its sanctity, and reinforce in the minds of the subjects a spirit of obedience; it is only through such psychological mechanisms that an exploitative system can sustain and justify its existence (Johnson 1960:41). For example, the hearts of deceased *obas* were eaten by their successors; it was believed that in this way the spirit of Oduduwa, was transferred into each successive Yoruba *oba*.

There were various patterns of social organization in the Yoruba kingdoms. One can refer to the Ondo model, the Ekiti model, the Ijebu model, and the Oyo model. These models have been described by different writers — Lloyd, Johnson, and Ayandele among others (Johnson 1960:62), but we shall draw mainly upon Johnson's description of the Oyo feudal kingdom.

The Oyo Model

Johnson asserted that the "*Alafin* [Oyo king] is the supreme head of all kings and princes of the Yoruba nation, as he was and is the direct lineal descendant and successor of the reputed founder of the nation" (Johnson 1960:41). Succession to the Oyo throne was by selection from among the royal dynastic groups. The rule of primogeniture had existed, but had been discarded because of conflicts between the *oremos* [heirs apparent] and previous *alafins*. The candidates for *alafin* were chosen by three senior nobles of the royal lineage — the *ona isokun*, the *ona aka*, and the *omo ola*. They submitted the names to the *oyo mesi* (discussed later) who, then decided on the identity of the next king.

ORGANIZATION OF THE NOBILITY. The aristocracy was split into two great divisions: the household of palace officials, and the nobility.

The household officials. These were split further into the royal and the nonroyal. The royal officials were the three senior officials whom we have mentioned, while the nonroyal officials consisted of titled officials, eunuchs, and *ilaris* (see below).

There were eight principal titled officials who performed specific duties at the palace. Some were in charge of those who ministered to the *alafin*; others had military functions. For example, the *ona modeke* was a military official who was in charge of the youths in the city and country who could be mobilized to bear arms. He organized them into military bands, and supervised their training in sports, civic duties, and warfare.

The *isugbins* were members of the palace orchestra; there were over two hundred instruments to entertain the king and the nobility. The *arokins* were the rhapsodists or national historians; their offices were hereditary. The *titus* were the sheriffs or king's executioners. There were nine such officials, each commanding a group; one group numbered about one hundred and fifty.

The next grade of nonroyal household officials were the eunuchs, who acted as guardians of the king's children. The princes and princesses were born in the house of the principal eunuch.

The *ilaris* were the lowest grade of palace officials. They served the king personally, and their names symbolized the king's dignity, power, and immortality. There were male and female *ilaris*; each title had a male–female aspect. The male *ilaris* served as the king's bodyguards or "the keepers of his head." They varied in status, including highly-placed servants, messengers, and warriors. Some of the favored ones were made masters of large compounds; the king supplied them with horses and grooms, and assigned them certain gates where they collected tolls for their maintenance. The proceeds were divided between their master and themselves. They also served the feudal lords, to whom some masters of large compounds in different parts of the city were subordinated in various capacities in times of war and peace (Johnson 1960:62).

There were three grades of females who held positions of importance at the palace. The first grade consisted of eight ladies who held the highest titles; the second was made up of eight priestesses, and the third consisted of seven ladies of high rank. These officials had vital functions. For example, the *iya kere*, the second of the eight officials in the first rank, was close to the king's mother and wielded great power at the palace. She was the keeper of the king's treasure, the royal insignia, and the other paraphernalia used on state occasions, and could withhold them if she felt aggrieved thus preventing such occasions from taking place. She was the person who placed the crown on the king's head at the coronation; and

she was the "mother" (head) of the *ilaris*, male and female; they were all installed in her apartment. The eight priestesses of various deities, for whom they were named performed ritual functions at the palace.

The royal nobility. There were two groups of princes (*omobas*): those with noble titles and those without. Members of the royal lineage were excluded from noble offices. Johnson explains that:

> As a rule distinguished members of the royal family except those holding responsible positions did not reside in metropolises [capital towns]; a great number of them were scattered all over the provinces especially in the Ekus Oki or metropolitan province, where each one resided as a lord of town or village. They took no part in the government of the place lest they overthrow the ruler but they were accorded their due honor as members of the royal lineage.
>
> Some of them with large families and followings built their own towns and became lords of these towns (Johnson 1960:68).

Princes with noble titles were grouped into two grades, the first grade, which consisted of three officials — *ona isokun, ona aka*, and *omo ola* — was referred to earlier; the second grade consisted of six officials who were termed "brothers."

The office of crown prince (the *aremo*) had once been of great importance. The *aremos* wielded great power at the time when they reigned with their fathers, but this practice was stopped in 1859 (Johnson 1960:69).

The nobility. There were two grades of nobles. The senior grade consisted of seven officials known as *oyo mesi*. These offices belonged to particular lineages and were not governed by the principle of primogeniture. The *oyo mesi* made the final selection among the candidates for the king from the list presented to them by the senior royal nobles. They also took part in the crowning of the king. They were the chief executive, legislative, judicial, and military officials of the kingdom. They were the keepers of the kingdom, and all the other officials were under their control. Each of them performed specific state duties, and they were consulted in all state matters by the *alafin*. The *bashorun*, their leader and spokesman, was the prime minister. He wielded powers that were second only to those of the king and took precedence over provincial kings and officials.

The other grade of nobles consisted of seven *esos*, or guardians of the kingdom. They held nonhereditary military offices which were awarded on the basis of merit. Each of the *esos* had ten captains under him. The *kakanfo*, their leader, was the field marshal. It was his duty to go to war every three years in whatever place the king named, and to return home victorious within three months or be brought home a corpse (Johnson 1960:74).

THE EMPIRE. The Oyo empire was not a centralized monolith, but consisted of local power structures with varying loyalties to the center. Most fully organized was metropolitan Oyo which was directly administered. Next came the provinces closely allied with Oyo, then provinces with considerable local autonomy where Oyo exercised only suzerainty, and finally autonomous states which had been conquered by Oyo and were forced to pay tribute. The *obas* and princes were drawn from local ruling lineages and exercised considerable autonomy, but on condition that they paid tribute to the *alafin* (Johnson 1960:109).

Characteristic Features of the Yoruba Kingdoms

The Yoruba kingdoms, including the Oyo model described above, shared certain common characteristics. The myths of most Yoruba towns related that the first *oba* of the present reigning dynasty "founded" the town, and that this *oba* was a direct descendant of Ododuwa, the progenitor of the Yoruba.

The *obas* were regarded as spirits incarnate. They possessed both secular and sacred powers. Ritual at installations, death ceremonies and festivals were all organized around the person of the *oba*, and the priests and priestesses ministered to deities associated with the office. Household officials, servants, eunuchs, and minstrels were found in great number, the size of the palace staff being in keeping with the value attached to the office.

COUNCILS. The *oba* was the head of a hierarchy of councils, all with honorific titles attached to membership. In some councils membership was hereditary; in others it was not, appointment being based on criteria set by the appointing *oba*. The nobles were graded according to the seniority of the office they held. There were military as well as civil officials. The grades of officials and their elaboration varied, but all of the kingdoms had very well-defined official hierarchies.

Most of the hereditary offices belonged to particular lineages, and were not governed by the principle of primogeniture. The hereditary offices elaborated by Lloyd fall into two categories: ". . . one in which the title may be held by any member of the group descended from the first holder of the title, the first we find in Ode Ondo and Ijebu, the other we find in Ekiti and Oyo" (Lloyd 1960:41). The chiefs were assigned particular roles in the kingdom.

> The chief has a political role as the advisor to the oba; an administrative role on behalf of the oba and other senior chiefs [representing the community]; the chief may be authorized to allocate land within the territorial units of which he is the recognized head; the chief is the head of a quarter of a sub community e.g. the

right to allocate vacant land in a quarter may be carried on by the chief; the chief is the head of the descent group, where the group has a hereditary chieftancy title the holder may be recognized as having the right to execute with the group's approval and authority any dealings in land with non members of the group (Lloyd 1960:49).

The political power within the kingdom resided with the *oba* and the chiefs. They constituted the administrative, executive, and judicial heads of the government. They were the war lords and defenders of the realm.

THE VASSALAGE SYSTEM. Each kingdom, as described, consisted of large areas made up of towns and villages, all accepting the rulership of an *oba* with whom they identified their political existence. An *oba*, in order to validate his political leadership, had the right to legislate throughout the kingdom although the rulers of the towns, villages, and provinces within the kingdom could make their own laws provided they did not conflict with those of the kingdom. Cases such as treason and homicide were referred to the courts of the *obas*, who had power over life and death; no mortal was above them. Moreover, the *oba* had the right to certain animals killed in his kingdom. The boundaries of the kingdoms were those of the *obas,* and boundary disputes were regarded as being between *obas*. Boundaries, Fadipe explains, ". . . are usually described as being between rulers but the subordinate ruler cannot state that he has common boundary with his Oba, for this is tantamount to a declaration of independence" (Fadipe 1970:219).

The senior lords who resided in the capital were the overlords of the towns. Contacts between town and *oba* were made through these senior chiefs at the capital and not through the local rulers of the towns.

Within the kingdoms, therefore, the chiefs exercised rights that were defined by custom. There were rights which they exercised as rulers of their towns and wards, those they assumed by virtue of their office, and those they exercised on behalf of the *oba*. The *oba* himself had certain rights over the entire kingdom which subordinate rulers were bound to respect.

THE COMMON PEOPLE. The common people consisted of free peasants and slaves. These two classes bore the brunt of the feudal economy, but the slaves were the more exploited of the two. Slavery as a system was a most profitable means of income. Fadipe explains how slaves were the instruments of production for the kings and their chiefs.

Slaves were purchased or were captured in warfare, and therefore only the ruling aristocracy could obtain them. By raiding and subduing outlying villages the territories of chiefdoms and kingdoms were expanded, and the conquered subjects were taken into slavery. Fadipe explains slave raids in this manner:

The principal owners of slaves were kings and chiefs, especially war chiefs and those who followed them to war. If the chief supplied the musket and powder, his share of the captives were two in three. If the follower supplied his own muskets, his share might be half. The chief submitted to the general officer commanding the slaves that fell to him, and the general took a certain percentage.

On return from the campaign, a certain percentage of the slaves that fell to the lot of the generalissimo had to go to the king or head chief, the superior person being allowed first choice, especially in the selection of women (1970:219).

The acquisition of slaves by the kings and chiefs was essential not only as a source of wealth but also for use in cultivating the land. The principal work of male slaves was farming; thus they released the ruling class from manual labor, giving them the opportunity for political manipulation. The king, through his fiefs, the officials, was kept informed of all that transpired in the city and the empire.

Slaves also served as retainers and servants at the courts of the kings and the residences of the nobility. Most slaves followed the occupational crafts of their masters, increasing the quantity of goods produced.

Some slaves, as discussed under our section on the Oyo model, served as toll collectors at the gates of the towns and cities. Slaves made up the warrior contingents, and those who were successful on the battlefield were granted privileges in the courts of the kings. Slaves were also the caretakers of the temples and lodges of the *ogboni* [secret societies].

SOURCES OF INCOME. As in all feudal societies, Yoruba *obas* and chiefs derived various types of income from their people. Fadipe explains that the revenue derived from the people was used as follows: (1) to finance war expenditures; (2) to serve as an annual tribute; (3) to finance sacrifices; and (4) to support the civil service (1970:221). He classifies the revenue sources as follows:

1. *Tolls*. These were levied upon every stranger leaving and sometimes upon those entering at the town gates. Tolls were also levied at certain fixed rates upon all valuables brought into the town, whether by members of the community or by strangers. Such valuables were slaves, horses, and cattle, upon each category of which a toll of one head of cowries (2,000 cowries) or 6d was collected in Oyo during the period preceding the establishment of colonial rule.

On other forms of merchandise than living things, tolls were collected at the respective gates leading to a town. These tolls were paid to special officials. Fadipe cites the case of Oyo, where

. . . for instance with a total of nine gates the receipts from one gate were assigned to the Basharum or prime minister, those from another gate to the Asipa (the descendants of the founder of the town), those from the third gate went to the aremo [crown prince] while those from the remaining gates went to the Alafin.

He explains the patterns elsewhere:

> In other communities, while the receipts from at least one gate were assigned to the king, those from each of the other gates were assigned jointly to two chiefs in which case it was the practice in some communities for each chief to place his own collector at the gate on alternate market days. In still others, the takings from all gates were polled and shared out among the king and his chiefs (Fadipe 1970:221).

Slaves and their descendants were appointed as slave collectors. At times they collected tolls in kind, such as foodstuffs and retained part for their own maintenance.

2. *Tribute.* The second source of income was tribute or annual levies imposed on each member of the kingdom. It was usually a flat-rate levy per head in cowries. The principal duty of the *bale* of each compound was to see that this annual levy was collected. The money was passed up through the hierarchy to the *oba* and his chiefs.

3. *Taxation.* Occasionally other taxes were imposed on the people. When this happened, the tax, like the annual tribute, was collected on a family compound basis.

4. *Imposed levies.* Special levies were often imposed on conquered towns, beleaguered or threatened with war. Once subdued, they had to pay the usual annual tribute to the *oba*.

5. *Court fees, fines, and damages.* In the courts throughout the kingdom the fees paid both by plaintiffs and defendants and the fines imposed on culprits were also sources of revenue for the king and the chiefs. The fines and fees derived from the administration of justice were usually divided between the king and the chiefs (Fadipe 1970:181–182).

6. *Fees from honorific titles.* Fadipe calls the fees paid by officials for receiving honorific titles from the kings "patronage fees," and these were also sources of income. Since there were many offices to distribute, the rival claimants tried to outbid each other.

7. *Imposed labor and conscription.* Slaves were used as revenue, and those captured in wars or used for payment of fines were recorded as sources of physical revenue. Forced labor was employed all year round, both on the farms and in the palaces of kings and chiefs. The products of farming were paid as tax revenue by the peasants.

THE BENIN FEUDAL KINGDOM

Historical Evolution

The development of the Benin Kingdom followed the usual pattern, beginning as a nucleus of small states which later expanded by absorbing

migrant groups and through conquest. Historical documents backed by oral tradition and chronicles of early Portuguese and Dutch visitors provide evidence of the activities of the Benin kings.

The kingdom had two historical origins. A chieftancy system appeared early in the development of the city, and there were five (now seven) senior *uzama* (hereditary chiefs who claimed to trace their titles to a period before the establishment of the ruling dynasty). During this early period there also existed, according to oral tradition, the Ogiso kings. They controlled petty states which collapsed with the banishment of the Ogisos.

The second historical period began when the *uzamas* transmitted a request to the King of Ife to send them a ruler. With this new line a more powerful Benin kingdom emerged among the Edos. One could infer a conquest from this; however, there is no evidence of this in either Benin or Ife tradition. Nevertheless, succeeding *obas* that emerged from this Ife line became the founders of the great Benin kingdom, whose expansion up to the seventeenth century has been well documented.

The Organization of the Kingdom

THE KING. As noted, the kingdom owed its history and existence to the activities of the kings of Benin, who wielded enormous power and influence. Their authority and their divinity were buttressed by the rituals of office which affirmed them as the symbolic representatives of the first founder of the kingdom. The kings appointed all the officers of the state, and the *uzama* chiefs received their titles from them. This right to confer titles placed them in a strong position; they had the power of life and death over their subjects; and wars were waged in their names. Their subjects paid tribute to them and they were the chief exponents of the laws of the land which they sanctioned along with the chiefs.

The capital, Benin, was divided into two parts — the area where the *oba* resided (the palace) and the other areas, occupied by the town people. The town was divided into forty wards, the members of which performed special duties for the *oba*. The inhabitants included craft specialists, blacksmiths and brass smiths, leather workers, wood and ivory carvers, tapestry weavers, drum makers, hunters, shepherds, cowherds, builders, many different groups of priests, doctors, diviners, ordeal administrators, minstrels, and other ceremonial functionaries (Bradbury 1952:34–35).

The *uzamas* lived outside the town in the villages they controlled.

THE NOBILITY. The Benin *obas* created a hierarchy of offices grouped into associations. The number of offices was increased by successive

kings, and we have already explained the origin of some of the offices. Each of the two divisions of the capital city was controlled by a hierarchy of officials.

The palace officials. The palace offices, the *eghaevo n'ogbe*, were grouped into three orders according to seniority: the *iwebo*, consisting of ten officials; the *iweguae*, made up of nine officials; and the *ibiwe*, comprising twelve officials. These grades had their separate apartments in the royal palace. Members of the *iwebo* who were grouped into nine apartments were in charge of the *oba*'s wardrobe and state regalia. They made and repaired the coral beads, garments, and ornaments which were the mark of high rank. The *iweguae* provided the keepers of the *erie* or harem, that is, the *oba*'s wives and children (Bradbury 1952:37). The *ibiwe* had two branches — the *ibiwe* proper (with eight titles) and the *eruaerie* (with four titles).

There were also three untitled junior grades of palace officials — the *ibierugbu* at the bottom, then the *odafe*, and the *uko* at the top. These three grades were supervised by two senior titled officers known as the *exaeve n'ogbe*. Movement into any of the three senior grades — *iwebo, iweguae,* and *ibiwe* — was possible only after the candidate had passed through the three junior grades, starting from the bottom. In other other words, one had to climb the ladder from the very bottom before one could reach the top. Within the palace association there was a definite leadership order. The various *otu eguae* (groups that served as training grounds for movement to the *eghaevo n'ogbe*) were led by officials of the *eghaevo n'ogbe*. Within each *otu*, titles were ranked roughly according to their supposed antiquity.

The town officials. The nineteen town chiefs formed a separate association known as the *eghaebhon'ore*. The *iyase* or head was their spokesman. These officials lived in the town and never in the *ogbe* [ward]. They were in charge of the forty wards into which the city was divided. The first four town officials, the *iyase, esugba, eso*, and *osuma*, constituted a formidable group that wielded power among the town chiefs and in the city itself. These were the first senior titles created in antiquity, but the number was increased to nineteen by later *obas*. The other chiefs controlled villages outside the city. The *ozoma* ruled the Uzebu village, the *ero* the Urubi village, and the *edaiken* ruled the Usolu village.

Besides crowning the *oba*, these officials performed duties for the state and took part in rituals at the palace. They organized their own military units for their tribes, and also had military titles; the head of the army was the *exomo*. They met with the *oba* at certain apartments in the palace.

Other titles. Besides the two senior titled associations (the palace offices

and the town offices), there were three junior titled grades, two of which were attached to the palace association — the *exaeve* (made up of sixty titles) and the *urhoehakpo* (made up of ten titles). The third, the *ibiwe na ekua*, whose leader's title was hereditary, was attached to the town chiefs. These junior titled officials were assigned special duties by the senior grades.

Thus, the Benin feudal state was an elaborate bureaucratic structure. The king exercised the power of appointing numerous officials to the titles that had been created by various *obas*, and the title holders were graded hierarchically according to the seniority of their titles.

On receiving his title, the holder swore an oath of fealty to the *oba* and was bound by his oath of office to obey the king and to carry out specific assignments in the kingdom. He could not delegate his duties without finding himself in trouble. The hierarchical order was accepted by those who held the titles, and those below any order recognized the order above them.

The Feudal Territorial Organization: Vassalage and Fiefdom

In the first section of this paper, we traced briefly the historical evolution of the vast empire that developed and encompassed the entire present midwestern region of Nigeria and extended into parts of Yorubaland and as far as Eko [Lagos], the present capital city of Nigeria. Now we shall look at how this vast empire was controlled from the capital, Benin City.

According to Bradbury (1952), the kingdom was divided on the basis of tribute units. Each unit consisted of a chiefdom, a group of villages, a village, a ward, or a combination of some of these. Each unit so constituted was placed under a chief, or agent in Benin, the capital. The chief was recognized by the people as "he who salutes the *oba* for the village," that is, he acted as an intermediary between the people and their king, and between the king and the village headman. The chief transmitted the *oba*'s orders and brought the wishes of the village to the *oba*. Appeals to the *oba*'s court passed through him.

His principal duty was to organize the yearly or twice-yearly tribute of yams, palm oil, meat, livestock, and other foodstuffs for the *oba*, and to remind the village headman that the tribute was due. The village headman or *iroghae* directed the collection of the dues from each household and then had them taken to the house of the village agent in the capital, who in turn took them to the palace. The village agents in the capital were the senior chiefs, the holders of the *eghaevo* titles — the town and palace chiefs and the *uzama* chiefs. The *edaiken* [the heir apparent] and the *oba*'s mother (the *iyoba*) also performed this function.

The agents performed their tasks meticulously for they, too, benefited

from the tribute by being allowed to keep portions for their own use. They did not make regular visits to their domains, but remained at Benin where they received deputations from the villages and took them to the palace. Some dispatched their servants to the area under their control to act as overseers, to collect dues, and to bring back information.

The tribute units associated with a particular title or office were not concentrated in a single area but were dispersed, so the one official might supervise units scattered in different parts of the kingdom. This method, Bradbury explains, prevented villages from becoming permanently associated with particular nobles and avoided any impression that certain chiefs held their offices in perpetuity.

The *oba* enjoyed the exclusive prerogative of allocating the tribute units, and he could therefore use them as a means of winning support or rewarding the faithful. The *oba*, too, had his own messengers whom he could send to the tribute units to report to him directly. In some cases, the *oba* stationed his own agents permanently in tributary towns and villages (Bradbury 1952:42). The higher nobles were the vassals to whom these tribute units, the fiefs, were allocated. Thus, vassalage and fiefdom were synonymous with the Benin feudal system.

Sources of Income

The maintenance of the kingdom was dependent on the income and resources from the various fiefs. Tribute, taxes, special levies, and forced labor were the common means of revenue for the *oba* and his chiefs.

The development of trade within the kingdom had been detailed by historians. The money economy expanded as trade with other kingdoms increased, and in the course of trade with the Portuguese and the Dutch. Internal and external trade were thus sources of income for the king and the nobility who had a monopoly on trade with the Europeans and derived huge profits from marketing the products made by their subjects.

Of first importance as a source of income was the tribute which was collected all over the kingdom. Second were the levies imposed at special times and collected like the tribute. Third were the tolls collected from the city and the town gates. Slaves captured in war were also sources of wealth, for they were sold or utilized for farming purposes.

Ling Roth has described the five methods by which the king obtained his revenue. I have summarized them as follows:

> As the accepted leader of a large empire, money from tributes and taxes came into the coffers of the king. The king had a very good source of income, for his territory was large and full of governors, and each one knew how many bags of boejes [cowries] the men of the country must raise annually for the king; this amounted to a vast sum, which it is impossible to estimate.

Secondly, tribute chiefs of the lower rank collected tribute in kind. Instead of money they delivered to the king cattle, sheep, in short, everything he required for his maintenance. . . .

Thirdly, the benefit of the trade with foreigners did not escape the governors and the kings; they both shared in it through the imposition of tolls or duties on the traders. Duties or tolls were not imposed on exported and imported wares but every trader had to pay a certain sum annually to the governor of the place where he lived, for the right to trade; part of this was sent to the king; hence the king could estimate what he should expect annually. . . .

Fourthly, it was not only in money that tolls or tribute were imposed for the king. . . . When an elephant was killed, the king had option of buying it if he wanted to. . . .

Fifthly, the king benefitted from taxes levied on the visiting merchants and their vessels (Nzimiro 1961).

In *Nigerian perspectives*, Hodgkin reproduces some comments by Dapper concerning commerce in Benin at the height of its power:

Commerce and military services are distinct functions and no one has the right to trade or to buy anything from the Europeans except the Fiadors and the merchants whom the king has appointed for that duty. A soldier could not enter the Christians' warehouses without great risk. As soon as a ship anchors on this coast, the king is informed and he summons two or three Fiadors and twenty or thirty merchants to whom he gives authority to do business with the Whites. These agents travel post-haste to Gotton [a Benin river port] where the Dutch have a warehouse, commandeering on their way as many canoes and oarsmen as they require; and when the owners complain, these expropriators ask them insolently if they are not the King's subjects, and if they do not wish their property to be used in his service. When they arrive at Gotton, they note the finest and most commodious houses, and take their merchandise there, without asking the house-owners' leave.

Often the inhabitants of Gotton have to turn out their homes to make room for these newcomers, and have, on the day of their arrival, to prepare meat dishes for them, without demanding anything for their pains. . . .

The first interview between the Fiadors and the Dutch is on a courtesy visit, the former arrive magnificently dressed, wearing necklaces of jasper or fine coral, to find the latter in their warehouses; to greet them on behalf of their king; to ask them news of Europe and their country; and to offer them various fruits which the Prince sends them. The Dutch reply to these compliments with others, and the only interruption is for drinking. The next day the Fiadors return and ask to see the goods; if these are articles which have been imported on previous occasions, they take them at the rate at which they were formerly sold. But if these are anything new, they bargain as hard as they can, sometimes for whole months (Hodgkin 1960:122).

MODERN CONDITIONS, FROM FEUDAL SOCIETY TO CAPITALIST SOCIETY

The Traditional Feudal State

The material under consideration in this paper reveals that the feudal

kingdoms of Nigeria evolved from clan units into archaic state structures. This happened when the kings and the nobles became a ruling aristocracy and formed a leisure class that dominated the class of slaves and the peasants, who became the main agents of production. These cleavages were defined by the roles each social class played in the feudal society, and such cleavages served, in accordance with the well-known principle enunciated by Engels, as the rationalization for state power. The king and his nobles defended the realm by employing the military manpower of the lower classes, who also bore the burden of the feudal economy.

Tribute, taxes, levies, market tolls, and forced labor were means of raising the necessary income for the maintenance of the kings, their governing aristocracy, and entourage. Some of the nobles were fief holders and lived on the resources derived from their fiefs.

Two definite classes emerged, as Engels postulated: "With slavery which attained its fullest development under civilization, came the first great cleavage of society into exploiting and exploited classes. This persisted during the whole of the civilized period" (Engels 1972:234). The material we have marshalled shows clearly that the feudal states relied on slaves as their primary means of material support. We have identified the cleavages in these societies between the free and the unfree, the nobility and the commoner class, the royal and the nonroyal groups. The cleavages were many, and revealed the nature of feudal social stratification. Moreover, the common people and the peasants were organized into occupational guilds (craft organizations), to serve the needs of the kings and the ruling nobility. There were religious preachers, (in the Islamic Fulani feudal societies these were the *mallams*) who acquired special status within the feudal hierarchy. Each stratum showed a definite cleavage, a social differentiation and a hierarchy of roles, but the two most visible classes were the king and the nobility on the one hand, and the common people on the other.

Fortes and Evans-Pritchard, who introduced the concept of "state" in the designation of feudal societies, defined them as societies "which have centralized authority, administrative machinery, and a judicial institution, in short a government in which the cleavages of wealth, privilege, and status correspond to the distribution of power and authority" (1960:5). The three feudal clusters we have discussed fall within this definition.

Nadel, writing about the Nupe, defined their feudal kingdom as a state organization. According to him, the Kede, a chiefdom within the wider Nupe Kingdom, was a state:

> Its dominion is territorial and not tribal [intertribal], its administration is centralized; its machinery of government is monopolised by a special *ad hoc* appointed or

elected body which is separated from the rest of the population by certain social and economic privileges (in Fortes and Evans-Pritchard 1960:174).

The feudal clusters within our example correspond to this definition. Lowie, in his *Origin of the state*, stressed that states have two attributes — territorial sovereignty and centralized authority, and Oppenheimer argued that one of the attributes of the state is the existence of a specialized ruling group (see Engels 1972:222). What they did not emphasize is the fact that the state is a product of class formation of an antagonistic character.

The Nigerian feudal kingdoms undeniably possessed the attributes of statehood. We agree with Engels that one of the main attributes of statehood is the existence of classes and class cleavages. These states became, in the Marxist reality, the instruments of oppression; and oppression was a characteristic common to all of them. As we have stated, the kings and the nobles oppressed the peasants and the slaves by extracting from them the economic means of their livelihood.

The Expansion of State Power

In the later stage of their transformation, these feudal states acquired more power. Previously, as we have pointed out, they were small chiefdoms, and political power was decentralized and dispersed throughout the kingdom; these chiefdoms had many of the attributes of European feudalism, which Marc Bloch summarized as follows:

> . . . a subject peasantry; wide use of the services of tenament [that is, fiefdom] instead of the salary which was out of the question; the supremacy of the class of specialized warriors, ties of obedience and protection which bound man to man, and, within the warrior class, assume the distinctive form called vassalage; fragmentation of authority — leading inevitably to disorder; and, in the midst of all this, the survival of the forms of association, family, state, of which the latter during the second feudal age, was to acquire renewed strength. . . (Bloch 1961:446).

The main difference is that the Nigerian feudal states

> . . . developed a type of state feudal landownership where the chief feudal lord was also in charge of a state or semiautonomous area of administration. Tax was paid by the direct producer instead of rent, but peasant cultivators were subject to all the machinery of law and economic control that marked state rather than private feudalism (Davis 1966:19).

As feudal societies, they possessed fiefs, a warrior class, ties of obedience indicated by the oath of fealty they swore on receiving their honorific titles, vassalage, and authority.

The Rise of a Merchant Class and the Beginning of the Capitalist Spirit

Abundant literature on the penetration of European merchants first into the Benin, then the Yoruba, and finally the Habe feudal kingdoms points to an important fact: the slave trade, which was aggravated by European penetrations, created among the feudal chiefs and their kings a comprador merchant class. This class supplied slaves in large quantities to the European traders. Ammunition and modern weapons of war facilitated slave raids. The profit motive dominated this vital commercial enterprise and led to raids, internal conflicts, and wars, which even resulted in the disintegration of some kingdoms. Benin and Oyo records support this assertion. Besides taking part in the slave trade, the merchant class took part in other commercial activities. We have shown how this occurred in Benin when the Dutch and Portuguese penetrated into the kingdom. The entire work of Ryder (1969) is devoted to this commercial contact. Among other documented aspects of these commercial enterprises, Dr. K. O. Dike (1956) showed how the commercial activities were carried out between the European traders and the kings and chiefs on the Niger. John Flint (1960) added further to this knowledge, as did the work of G. I. Jones (1963). The Fulani, who took over from the Habe in the nineteenth century, were active traders and participated in the commercial activities that went on between the Hausa states of Kano, Katsina, and Bornu.

There were, therefore, combinations of commerce and the slave trade, and the feudal chiefs and kings participated in these lucrative ventures. Slavery continued for a long time, until it was finally abolished by the British. From that time on, commerce took the upper hand, and the fortunes of the new commercial bourgeoisie rose.

The Colonial and Post-Colonial Eras: The Intensification of Capitalism

The British came first to the coast, where they attacked and subdued the Yoruba feudal kingdoms; and in 1897 they subjugated the Benin Kingdom. Missionary activities in Yorubaland helped to mitigate some of the cruel aspects of feudalism by attacking the trade in human beings and thus diminishing one source of income for the ruling class.

In Lagos, where the British enthroned a puppet king, the increase in new, legitimate trade improved the situation of the new commercial bourgeoisie. As time went on, the chiefs began to take part in the commercial activities of the city. The new generation of educated people from the royal houses and lineages gradually acquired the capitalist spirit. The present *oba* of Lagos went to Europe recently to attract foreign companies.

In Yorubaland the kings and chiefs became involved in commercial activities. As cocoa became a vital commercial crop, some of the new members of the aristocracy acquired land and became cocoa farmers. They made huge profits from abundant yields at times when good prices were offered by the marketing boards. As urban land acquired greater economic value, members of the new middle class, as well as members of the aristocracy, became urban land speculators.

In the north, the influence of money in the urban economy affected the economic values of the new members of the ruling aristocracy, and the acquisition of wealth through trade has become a vital factor in modern social stratification.

The ruling aristocracy within these feudal societies was no longer able to retain control in the new economic adventure. The rise of the new bourgeoisie, the *nouveaux riches*, who were not necessarily drawn from the ruling houses but from the ranks of the educated middle class and professionals as well, presented a threat to the position of the ruling aristocracy. There was evidence everywhere that the colonial assault had already diminished the power and economic position of the feudal aristocracy by abolishing territorial fiefdoms; prohibiting the economic basis of feudalism — tribute, taxes, levies, tolls, and forced labor; abolishing the military hierarchy; and limiting the judicial powers of the feudal class. The feudal class no longer commanded the political system; while the imperialists tried to use them to fight the new bourgeoisie, they lost totally to this new class when independence was won. The old aristocracy became a pawn in the chess game of the political parties during the First Republic. They lost political power to the new bourgeoisie, and with it their economic power; they no longer had absolute control over the native treasuries, and their stipends depended on the patronage of the bourgeoisie of the post independence era.

The new bourgeoisie made use of the economic structure of the state. They accumulated wealth by various means, such as loans from state banks and participation in new enterprises coming into the country. They obtained loans through state-funded public corporations and boards, acted as compradors for foreign enterprises, allocated themselves urban land thus becoming aggressive urban land speculators, obtained percentage bribes from foreign firms for permission to operate in the country. They became company directors and funded these companies with money obtained from state sources, most of which was later written off as bad debts.

The modern state under the control of the new bourgeoisie absorbed the traditional states and welded them into national or regional political entities. Constitutional reforms placed the power in the new state structure in the hands of the new bourgeoisie; while they respected the position of the kings and their feudal aides, they did not abdicate the

levers of modern power to them. Under the regional structure, the new bourgeoisie tried to transform the former feudal societies into a capitalistic society, for capitalism was rightly considered more advantageous for the transformation of society.

But the new bourgeoisie from the feudal-oriented areas did not totally abandon the symbolic aspects of the feudal honorific titles. They married into the feudal aristocracy, accepting honorific titles from the kings. The parties of the First Republic were reformist and reactionary parties, and one of the reasons for the failure of the First Republic was the enchantment of the bourgeoisie with traditional feudal values.

They conjured up the ethnocentric ideology of feudalism to defend the unity of the defunct feudal kingdoms and values. Hence the NPC (Northern People's Congress) found itself married to the emirs; it was a metamorphosis of the feudal society in new guise, except that the forces of modern capitalism compelled the new class to assault certain vital vantage points of feudal state power which they considered impediments to the evolution of capitalism. The Action Group began by rallying the Ododuwa mythology, on the basis of which every Yoruba king claimed his origin and the divinity of his kingship. Even in the Eastern region, where feudalism never existed, the reactionary government created a feudal House of Chiefs; and persons who had never participated in or even witnessed the political rituals of feudalism now adorned themselves as chiefs so as not to be outdone by the bourgeoisie of the other feudal-dominated regions.

This uniting of opposites, brought together the old and the new. The impact on the old was felt in that they, too, were participating in the economic venture of the new bourgeoisie. This amalgam, however, kept the feudal class in a secondary position, for real political and economic power were under the control of the bourgeoisie.

Thus, we can assert that urbanization has affected the structure of traditional feudal centers like Kano, Zaria, Maidugiri, Ife Abeokuta, Oyo, Ibadan, Ijebu Ode, Ogwashi Ukwu, Agbo, and Onitsha Oguta, which have become modern centers of commercial enterprise and administration. Industries are located in some of these feudal domains, and trade, markets, municipal enterprises, and petty independent craft organizations of modern types have sprung up, giving the urban societies a new capitalist aspect not within the control of the kings and the ruling aristocracy.

In Kano City the rapid transformation due to the influence of capitalism is readily visible. The *dantatas*, merchants, and produce buyers of Kano, who handle the groundnut, kola nut, cattle, cotton, leather, and piassava, control thousands of *naira* which were beyond their reach in the old days of feudalism. The *oni* of Ife and *Oba* Akenzua had tested modern political power as onetime ministers of the new government, and they,

too, understand the value of investment in modern economic terms. So also do their chiefs, who are now recruited from among the new bourgeoisie.

Although Nigerian feudal societies have become not yet entirely transformed, the historical reality is that feudalism as an economic system has no future in contemporary capitalist Nigeria. The change has come, and even though the diehards have not heard the Bastille fall, the trumpets of capitalism shall certainly drown out those of feudalism in the social antiphony of contemporary Nigeria.

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PART FIVE

Idealogical Reflections

British Social Anthropology

TALAL ASAD

British functional anthropology began to emerge as a distinctive discipline shortly after World War I through the efforts of Malinowski and Radcliffe-Brown, but it was not until after World War II that it gained an assured academic status in the universities. Compared with the two decades before World War II an enormous quantity of anthropological writing was published in the two decades after it. Within this brief period its claim to academic respectability was virtually unchallenged. By 1961 a prominent sociologist could write that "social anthropology is, among other things, a small but I think flourishing profession. The subject, like social work and unlike sociology, has prestige" (MacRae 1961:36). A few years later a political scientist contrasted social anthropology favorably with sociology, declaring that unlike the latter, but like the other bona fide social sciences, social anthropology "had built up a body of knowledge which cannot readily be described as anything else" (Runciman 1965:47).

Functional anthropology had barely secured its enviable academic reputation when some serious misgivings began to make themselves felt from within the established profession. In 1961 Leach claimed that "functionalist doctrine [has] ceased to carry conviction" (1961:1). Five years later Worsley wrote his trenchant critique under the significant title "The end of anthropology?" By 1970 Needham was arguing that social anthropology "has no unitary and continuous past so far as ideas are concerned. . . . Nor is there any such thing as a rigorous and coherent body of theory proper to social anthropology" (1970:36–37). A year later Ardener observed that

> . . . something has already happened to British anthropology (and to international anthropology in related ways) such that for practical purposes text-books which

looked useful, no longer are; monographs which used to appear exhaustive now seem selective; interpretations which once looked full of insight now seem mechanical and lifeless (1971:449).

The plausibility of the anthropological enterprise which seemed so self-evident to all its practitioners a mere decade before, was now no longer quite so self-evident. A small minority, apart from the names just mentioned, had begun to articulate its doubts in radical terms.[1]

What had happened to British social anthropology? At the organizational level nothing very disturbing had happened. On the contrary, the Association of Social Anthropologists flourished as never before; it held annual academic conferences whose proceedings were regularly published in handsome hardcover and paperback editions. Monographs, articles and textbooks by writers calling themselves anthropologists appeared in increasing number. A prestigious series of annual lectures on social anthropology was launched under the auspices of the British Academy. The subject was taught in more university and college departments than ever before; the profession even negotiated to introduce it as a sixth-form option in schools. Seen in terms of its public activity, there was no crisis in social anthropology.

On the whole, professional leaders of British anthropology were not impressed by alarmist talk about crisis (see, for example, Lewis 1968). They would maintain, if pressed, that as the older ideas of social anthropology became exhausted, it was natural that one should turn to fresh sources of supply.[2] They preferred to talk of increasing specialization, which they saw as a sign of the intellectual vitality of the profession (Gluckman and Eggan 1965); and more positively, they affirmed that classic functionalist assumptions were still viable (Social Science Research Council 1968).

Yet we would be well-advised not to be too easily persuaded by such bland assurances. After all, there is a tendency among establishment leaders to maintain at least the myth if not the reality of smooth continuity. There can be no doubt that at the ideological level something had indeed "already happened to British anthropology" as Ardener put it, although this event is better seen as a disintegration of the "old anthropology" rather than as a crystallization of the "new."

There was a time when social anthropology could and did define itself

[1] The most interesting of these included Banaji (1970), Copans (1971), and Leclerc (1972).

[2] It is this line of reasoning that Firth (1972) adopted to explain and endorse the recent anthropological interest in Marx. See for example the introduction by Max Gluckman and Fred Eggan to the first four volumes in the ASA Monographs series and the Social Science Research Council's *Research in social anthropology* (1965).

unambiguously as the study of primitive societies. As Nadel wrote shortly after World War II:

> The scope of any science is to obtain and extend knowledge. In social anthropology as it is commonly understood we attempt to extend our knowledge of man and society to "primitive" communities, "simpler peoples", or "preliterate societies". . . . If an anthropologist asks naïvely why, if we are only interested in studying society writ large, we should turn to primitive cultures rather than our own civilization . . . the answer is simply that our own society is not the only one, and its phenomena not the same as those found, or apt to be found, in primitive society (1953:2).

Statements of this kind do not indicate a very sophisticated concern for the definition of a problematic, but they reflected an element of pragmatic truth, and it was this that gave social anthropology a practical plausibility. When Evans-Pritchard wrote the well-known introduction to his *Social anthropology* it seemed reasonably clear what the subject was about. As he explained:

> The social anthropologist studies primitive societies directly, living among them for months or years, whereas sociological research is usually from documents and largely statistical. The social anthropologist studies societies as wholes — he studies their ecologies, their economics, their legal and political institutions, their family and kinship organizations, their religions, their technologies, their arts, etc., as parts of general social systems (1951:11).

The doctrines and approaches that went by the name of functionalism thus gave social anthropology an assured and coherent style.

Today by contrast, even this coherence of style is absent. The anthropologist now is someone who studies societies both "simple" and "complex"; resorts to participant observation, statistical techniques, historical archives, and other literary sources; finds himself intellectually closer to economists or political scientists or psychoanalysts or structural linguists or animal behaviorists than he does to other anthropologists. To describe this state of affairs in terms of scholarly specialization is surely to indulge in mystification. The "cognate disciplines" of politics, economics, etc. were in existence long before the classical (functionalist) phase of social anthropology. The question that must be asked is, why was it only comparatively recently that they were discovered by anthropologists? Why was it, for example, that in 1940 anthropologists could write: "We have not found that the theories of political philosophers have helped us to understand the societies we have studied and we consider them of little scientific value" (Fortes and Evans-Pritchard 1961:4); and in 1966: "We consider that the time is ripe for a dialogue, if not for marriage between anthropology and the other disciplines concerned with comparative politics" (Swartz et al. 1966:9). What had made the time ripe? How was it

that the separate disciplines (economics, politics, jurisprudence, etc.) which reflected the fragmented self-understanding of bourgeois society, with its own historical contradictions, had become ready to inspire anthropology?

The answer I would suggest is to be sought in the fact that since World War II, fundamental changes had occurred in the world which social anthropology inhabited, changes which affected the object, the ideological support, and the organizational base of social anthropology itself. And in noting these changes we remind ourselves that anthropology does not merely apprehend the world in which it is located, but that the world also determines how anthropology will apprehend it.

The attainment of political independence by colonial countries (especially African) in the late 1950's and early 1960's accelerated the trend, apparent since the war, of socioeconomic change: the planned development of national networks of communications, electrification, and broadcasting; the promotion of education and of rural improvement projects; the shifts of political power from "tribal" leaders to the nationalist bourgeoisie, etc. Mainly as a consequence of nationalist expectations, scholars had begun to rediscover an indigenous history.[3] Some nationalist writers denounced the colonial connections of anthropology. Thus increasingly the larger political-economic system thrust itself obtrusively into the anthropologist's framework, as did the relevance of the past, both colonial and precolonial.

At another level, mounting criticism of the functionalist tradition in American mainstream sociology contributed indirectly to undermining functionalist doctrine in British social anthropology.[4] Because it had never adequately clarified the distinction between a totalizing method (in which the formation of parts is explained with reference to a developing structure of determinations) and ethnographic holism (in which the different "institutions" of a society are all described and linked one to another);[5] and since it had in general confused structural determination

[3] This was achieved partly by challenging the functional anthropologist's dogma that only written records could provide a reliable basis for reconstructing history (Vansina 1965). The general tendency of functional anthropology was to assimilate indigenous history to the category of myth, i.e. to view it in terms of instrumentality rather than of truth in the classical, nonpragmatist sense.

[4] Leading sociologists in America, e.g. Parsons, Merton, and Homans, had always taken an active and sympathetic interest in British social anthropology, and their writings in turn were a source of inspiration and support to functional anthropologists. The attack on American structural-functionalism by such writers as Ralf Dahrendorf and C. Wright Mills was bound therefore to affect the doctrinal self-confidence of British social anthropology.

[5] That this distinction remains unclear to many anthropologists even today is apparent from the over-confident remarks of Lévi-Strauss in his polemic against Sartre: "It is possible that the requirement of 'totalization' is a great novelty to some historians, sociologists and psychologists. It has been taken for granted by anthropologists ever since they learnt it from Malinowski . . ." (*The Savage Mind*, London 1966:250). What anthropologists learnt from Malinowski was ethnographic holism, not the method of totalization.

with simultaneity, concrete developments in the world outside pushed functional anthropology until it collapsed into microsociology. So it is that today most anthropologists have chosen to reorient themselves in relation to a multitude of fragmentary problems — political, economic, domestic, cultic, etc. — at a "small-scale" level, and have found in this state of fragmentation their sense of intellectual direction provided by their relevant "cognate discipline."

These changes in the object of study and in the ideological supports of social anthropology might by themselves have led to a disintegration of the discipline, but the same postwar period witnessed a significant development in the organizational base of social anthropology which saved it. In 1946 the Association of Social Anthropologists of the British Commonwealth (ASA) was founded with less than 20 members; by 1962 the membership had risen to over 150, "even though election to membership required normally both the holding of a teaching or a research post in the Commonwealth and the attainment of either a post-graduate degree (usually a doctorate) or substantial publications."[6] Once this base was in effective operation, social anthropology as institutionalized practice could dispense with the doctrinal specificity it had previously insisted on. Professional distinctiveness could now be maintained through an established network of vested interests — for which the ASA was a coordinating agency — rather than by any particular doctrines or methods. Anthropology was now truly a "profession."

Ironically, the same forces that were contributing to the ideological dissolution of classical functional anthropology had also contributed to a strengthening of its organizational base. Thus Fortes noted that during World War II in Britain,

> . . . economic, political and especially military necessities aroused a new and lively public interest in the African and Asiatic dependencies of Britain and her allies. The plans for post-war economic and social development in these areas generated under pressure of war-time experiences included big schemes of research in the natural and social sciences. The boom in anthropological studies thus foreshadowed began after Radcliffe-Brown had retired from the Oxford chair [in 1946] (1949:xiii).

It was in the year of Radcliffe-Brown's retirement that the ASA was founded by scholars who were already members of the long-established but far less exclusive Royal Anthropological Institute. An exclusive "professional" organization was clearly far better placed to exploit the new funding possibilities for research in the changing power pattern of the postwar world.

[6] See Gluckman and Eggan (1965:xii). By 1968 the Association had about 240 members (Social Science Research Council 1968:79).

It is not a matter of dispute that social anthropology emerged as a distinctive discipline at the beginning of the colonial era, that it became a flourishing academic profession toward its close, or that throughout this period its efforts were devoted to a description and analysis — carried out by Europeans, for a European audience — of non-European societies dominated by European power. And yet there is a strange reluctance on the part of most professional anthropologists to consider seriously the power structure within which their discipline has taken shape. The typical attitude is well represented by the following passage by Victor Turner in which the problem of the relationship between anthropology and colonialism is trivialized and dismissed in the space of two short paragraphs:

> It used to be argued by officials of the *ancien régime* that anthropologists, immersed as they were in the specificities of African life, came to accept the structural perspective of their informants, became their spokesmen, and by their words and works impeded the efforts of district and provincial administrators to govern efficiently. Some were even accused by white settlers and European civil servants of being "Reds," "socialists," and "anarchists." It is now asseverated by African leaders and administrators, down to the district level, that anthropologists before independence were "apologists of colonialism" and subtle agents of colonial supremacy who studied African customs merely to provide the dominant white minority with information damaging to native interests but normally opaque to white investigation. Thus yesterday's "socialist" has become today's "reactionary." Sir Alan Burns [1957] and Frantz Fanon [1961] are improbably allied.
>
> It is true, of course, that in their personal capacity anthropologists, like everyone else, have a wide spectrum of political views. Some are known "conservatives"; others lean far to the "left." But as professionals, anthropologists are trained, over almost as many years as doctors, to collect certain kinds of information as "participant observers" which will enable them, whatever may be their personal views, to present as objectively as the current level of their discipline's development permits, a coherent picture of the sociocultural system they have elected to spend some years of their lives in studying, and of the kinds of processes that go on in it. It is their ultimate duty to publish their findings and expose them, together with an exact description of the means by which they were obtained, to the international public of their anthropological colleagues and beyond that to the "world of learning." Eventually, news of their work and analyses, through their own "popular" writings or through citations, résumés (not infrequently bowdlerized) and digests by non-anthropologists, seeps through to the general reading public. Time thus winnows their reports and rids them of much that is biased and "loaded." There is no point in special pleading or tendentious argument; there are professional standards against which all reports are measured, and, in the end, the common sense of the common man (1971:1–2).

But to speak about "professional standards" and the authority of "common sense" is surely no less naïve than are wild remarks about anthropology being merely the handmaiden of colonialism. There are today no clear-cut standards in anthropology, there is only a flourishing professional organization; and the common sense of Western common man,

himself an alienated and exploited being, is hardly reliable as a critical test of anthropological knowledge. And yet the easy assurance of Turner's remarks is itself an indication of the kind of commonsense world that the typical anthropologist still shares, and knows he shares, with those whom he primarily addresses.

We have been reminded time and again by anthropologists of the ideas and ideals of the Enlightenment in which the intellectual inspiration of anthropology is supposed to lie (see, for example, Evans-Pritchard 1951; Harris 1968; Firth 1972). But anthropology is also rooted in an unequal power encounter between the West and the Third World which goes back to the emergence of bourgeois Europe, an encounter in which colonialism is merely one historical moment.[7] It is this encounter that gives the West access to cultural and historical information about the societies it has progressively dominated, and thus not only generates a certain kind of universal understanding but also reinforces the inequalities in capacity between the European and the non-European worlds (and derivatively, between the Europeanized elites and the "traditional" masses in the Third World). We are today becoming increasingly aware of the fact that information and understanding produced by bourgeois disciplines like anthropology are acquired and used most readily by those with the greatest capacity for exploitation. This follows partly from the structure of research, but more especially from the way in which these disciplines objectify their knowledge. It is because the powerful who support research expect the kind of understanding which will ultimately confirm them in their world that anthropology has not very easily turned to the production of radically subversive forms of understanding. It is because anthropological understanding is overwhelmingly objectified in European languages that it is most easily accommodated to the mode of life (and hence to the rationality) of the world power which the West represents.

We must begin from the fact that the basic reality which made prewar social anthropology a feasible and effective enterprise was the power relationship between dominating (European) and dominated (non-European) cultures. We then need to ask ourselves how this relationship has affected the practical preconditions of social anthropology; the uses to which its knowledge was put; the theoretical treatment of particular topics; the mode of perceiving and objectifying alien societies; and the anthropologist's claim to political neutrality.

The colonial power structure made the object of anthropological study accessible and safe — because of it, sustained proximity between the observing European and the living non-European became a practical

[7] Claude Lévi-Strauss was one of the first anthropologists to note this important fact, although he has barely gone beyond noting it (1967:51–52).

possibility. It made possible the kind of human intimacy on which anthropological fieldwork is based, but ensured that that intimacy should be one-sided and provisional. It is worth noting that virtually no European anthropologist has been won over personally to the subordinated culture he has studied; although countless non-Europeans, having come to the West to study its culture, have been captured by its values and assumptions, and have contributed to an understanding of it. The reason for this asymmetry is the dialectic of world power.

Anthropologists can claim to have contributed to the cultural heritage of the societies they study by a sympathetic recording of indigenous forms of life that would otherwise be lost to posterity. But they have also contributed, sometimes indirectly, toward maintaining the structure of power represented by the colonial system. That such contributions were not in the final reckoning crucial for the vast empire which received knowledge and provided patronage does not mean that they were not critical for the small discipline which offered knowledge and received that patronage. For the structure of power certainly affected the theoretical choice and treatment of what social anthropology objectified — more so in some matters than in others. Its analyses — of holistic politics most of all, of cosmological systems least of all — were affected by a readiness to adapt to colonial ideology. (Once should, in any case, avoid the tendency found among some critics and defenders of social anthropology to speak as though the doctrines and analyses labelled functionalism were parts of a highly integrated logical structure.) At any rate the general drift of anthropological understanding did not constitute a basic challenge to the unequal world represented by the colonial system. Nor was the colonial system as such — within which the social objects studied were located — analyzed by the social anthropologist. To argue that the anthropologist's expertise did not qualify him to consider such a system fruitfully is to confess that this expertise was malformed. For any object which is subordinated and manipulated is partly the product of a power relationship, and to ignore this fact is to misapprehend the nature of that object.

Clearly the anthropologist's claim to political neutrality cannot be separated from all that has been said so far. Thus the scientific definition of anthropology as a disinterested (objective, value-free) study of "other cultures" helped to mark off the anthropologist's enterprise from that of colonial Europeans (the trader, the missionary, the administrator, and other men of practical affairs); but did it not also render him unable to envisage and argue for a radically different political future for the subordinate people he objectified and thus serve to merge that enterprise *in effect* with that of dominant status-quo Europeans? If the anthropologist sometimes endorsed or condemned particular social changes affecting "his people," did he, in this ad hoc commitment, do any more or any less than many colonial Europeans who accepted colonialism as a system? If

he was sometimes accusingly called "a Red," "a socialist," or "an anarchist" by administrators and settlers, did this not merely reveal one facet of the hysterically intolerant character of colonialism as a system, with which he chose nevertheless to live *professionally* at peace?

I believe it is a mistake to view social anthropology in the colonial era as primarily an aid to colonial administration, or as the simple reflection of colonial ideology. I say this not because I subscribe to the anthropological establishment's comfortable view of itself, but because bourgeois consciousness, of which social anthropology is merely one fragment, has always contained within itself profound contradictions and ambiguities — and therefore the potentiality — for transcending itself. For these contradictions to be adequately apprehended it is essential to turn to the historical power relationship between the West and the Third World and to examine the ways in which it has been dialectically linked to the practical conditions, the working assumptions, and the intellectual product of all disciplines representing the European understanding of non-European humanity.

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Reminiscences of Primitive Divisions of Labor Between Sexes and Age Groups in the Peasant Folklore of Modern Times

IMRE KATONA

The division of labor between the sexes and age groups, having always been present in social production, is generally thought of as a law of nature and is elaborated by different sciences according to its significance for them. Similarly the bipartite division of social groups on the basis of sex and age groups is considered to be of eternal validity. Opinions may differ, sometimes do very markedly, on the question of the social roles and relative significance of men and women, especially in connection with the relations within class societies. (The question of age groups invites far less debate.)

Not surprisingly, the realities of this bipartite world of production and society have been recognized and acknowledged, but this is not the case with their reflection in the mind. However, as long as folklore, the most particular form of social mind, exists, division on the basis of sex and age groups remains a reality. The fact that the genres and occasions of folklore depend on the sexes and age groups is usually established for only one nation, social group, and genre; at best, the origin of the *main* oral genres is pictured as something depending on the sexes (thus lyrics developed on the distaff side and epic poetry on the spear side). But the social conditions of folklore as a whole have been subjected to only scanty investigation. The thorough investigation and elaboration of this important problem may have been hindered by the fact that the exchange of genres between the sexes has been apparently increasing; genres not depending on the sexes (for instance, certain groups of love songs) continue to spread, and folklore begins to serve the division and struggles of the working classes, thus reflecting a basic change in its social character. But neither verbal nor written poetry has managed to eliminate the boundary between the sexes and age groups, and quite possibly they never will.

We have a great deal of random information about the exclusive nature of the folklore activity of the two sexes, especially in the fields of initiation, secret societies, and magic and religious ceremonies. All the data emphasize occasional separation on the basis of sex; violation of this separation might bring serious and sometimes fatal consequences. Exclusion from community activities could remain the dominant punishment even later on (e.g. from European drama-like customs and certain elements of wedding ceremonies and fertility rites); in most instances, however, the punishment is milder (transgressors are the objects of practical jokes and humiliation). Exclusion from the activities of the community is generally initiated by the dominant sex (mostly men) of the given society, and it is aimed at the other sex or certain age groups, but there are secondary appearances of a defending and imitating nature as well (e.g. women's secret societies in Africa; the second stage of the European Easter sprinkling ceremony in which an initiative role is assumed by women; and, as a matter of fact, the ladies' invitation at balls). These, however, can always be traced back to primary forms. A typical and valued pattern of the popular customs of mummery is the imitation of the other sex in an ironical, funny way. (We shall come back to this question later on.)

Social activities involving both sexes do not necessarily imply a simultaneous equality between the sexes but rather a temporal succession and almost always, the subordination by influential (predominant) minor (secondary) sex groups. The most spectacular example is mixed group dancing, in which both men and women take part: the two sexes nearly always dance in separate groups, either in inner and outer or side-by-side circles, semicircles, or rows that can be combined in more or less closed patterns but never mixed; the pattern of joining hands in turn is a relatively recent development. This dance pattern is preserved in Arabian and Indian, folk dances. Modern couple dances have been developing in Europe since the Renaissance, but most people learned them only centuries later. However, here too it is the man who plays the initiating role; even in the case of complete equality, the motion of the woman only follows or "mirrors" that of the man. In mixed dances there is nearly always a leading dancer or leading group, and it is always composed of members of the dominant sex. Musical accompaniment may be provided by members of the same or of the opposite sex; old patterns, such as dancing accompanied by singing, are normally preserved by the secondary sex, which also retains knowledge of the more primitive instruments. The motion patterns and steps of the dominating sex might be transferred to the secondary sex, but their origin is usually detectable.

Compared to the human voice, instruments and instrumental music are later developments and require certain specialization. Generally, the

dominant sex is in charge of music, but because earlier music was always only an accompaniment and thus subordinated to action, motion, and singing, instrumental music might be learned by the secondary sex; and in that case it performs a "service" role. Where there are many mixed orchestras we can conclude that the sexual division in terms of instruments played expresses earlier social differences rather than differences arising from biological abilities.

Verbal poetry has been structured on the basis of sex from its beginnings: genre and sex can be correlated with considerable certainty, especially if we know which sex is more dominant. Thus, for instance, lullabies, mourning songs, and many other, mainly occasional, genres belong to the repertory of women while epic or "militant" genres belong mostly to men. Where this division according to sex is still valid, only eight to ten percent of the song types can be regarded as the common mental achievement of the two sexes. Southern Slav *junaĭke pesme* [epic poetry] and *ženske pesme* [lyrics] have preserved the memory of this division although neither one belongs exclusively to one of the sexes.

Works of art, types, and genres taken over from the other sex normally absorb "masculine" or "feminine" features in the new social setting; but in most cases the ancient pattern or the previous sex setting can be detected. Thus among Eastern and Southern Slavs female minstrels appeared, but it can be demonstrated that their repertory was of male origin. Hungarian ballads came to be sung more and more frequently by women, and consequently, but not solely because of this, the ballads became shorter and more lyrical, and they came to be focused on heroines. There is, for example, a Hungarian folk ballad, *Pápainé*, that had a male hero 120 years ago, but by the turn of the century it had a female one. It was again in Hungary that genres which earlier were considered "masculine," e.g. highwayman songs and soldier songs, came to be sung by women, and in the course of this, the songs underwent change, became more lyrical, and lost their militant nature. Even the scene of the songs changed, involving the home and the family more often.

In this context the Hungarian love ditty and popular song (a folk-like song written by a known author) are even more instructive. Both are love genres from earlier centuries that were developed and sung by men; some of them spread among women after a few generations, but the original setting is still detectable. (Not only might the figures be changed by women singers, they made other alterations as well.) Certain types of song took centuries to be transferred from one sex to the other (e.g. songs for mocking girls and songs for choosing girls only slowly gave way to songs for mocking boys and songs for choosing them). The "lyric confrontation" of the youth of both sexes is also instructive. Love songs are normally preceded by songs for mocking each other, in which the same

words are generally employed by each sex. Thus we see the possibility of a genre which does not belong to a particular sex emerging.

The central genre of recent times, the love song, is considered not to belong to a particular sex. But neutralization is not perfect here, either. Thus, for example, in northern Albania love songs are generally sung by male solo singers (paralleling epic songs), but in the south they are sung by male groups, which are distinctly separated from women. If men and women sing together, the leading singers are men, as is the case with leading dancers. Hungarian development has gone much further: the above-mentioned Hungarian popular song was a genre for men, but the mass song of modern times, the *sláger* [hit], no longer belongs to a particular sex. There is no way of knowing which sex the "I" and "you" are; at most, the sex of the singer can give a clue, but the song might be performed by mixed groups. Thus any Hungarian "hit" song can be sung by a member of either sex without any alterations; this is one of the reasons for its popularity.

The way the musical accompaniment of lyrics, mostly love songs, undergoes changes is very similar to the way dance music changes. If the singer does not accompany himself or herself, he or she might be accompanied by musicians of the same sex in a closed group or by musicians of the opposite sex. Here, too, choral singing is sustained for a longer time by the secondary sex, and instruments are classified on the same principle.

The division between the sexes in the prose epic is somewhat simpler but has been less investigated. Although we have international data about so-called "women's," "men's," and "children's" tales, these only apply to *groups* of tales (such as family, heroic, and animal tales) and by no means exhaust their content. Hungarian studies have shown, surprisingly, that sex-based differences are considerable even in the twentieth century. The common types of tales amount to no more than eight to ten percent of the total, the same proportion as with the common songs. Men learned tales from men outside the family and the village, while women learned from women at home or from relatives. Members of one sex will not tell the tales of the other, even if they know them. Adventurous, heroic, and funny tales figure most frequently in the repertory of men, while the majority of women's tales are connected with the family. Men's tales generally start from the village but soon get transferred to strange, wider scenes where they end; women's tales, on the other hand, return to the village and the family. Men go into more detail in their tales; women are more reserved. Men will put a male figure at the center of the action even if he is a repulsive creature (e.g. the devil). Women see and make us see everything in terms of the interests of their own sex (as in Hungarian folk ballads). Women's tales are also much closer to children's tales than are the tales of men. In the humorous genres it is the "weaker sex" that is

ridiculed (which sex this is depends, of course, on the sex of the tale-teller because women also like to mock the faults of men).

In primitive societies the child is regarded as having no sex and acquires one only after initiation (initiation means being bound not only to a sex but to an age-group, too). Remnants of this "neutral" thinking about children can survive for quite a long time, for example, in habits of dressing children in the same way and addressing them alike. Children's folklore, moreover, really does not depend on sex, at least not the sayings and games of the youngest children. But quite suddenly, shortly after they reach school age, children's activities become sexually segregated. Hungarian singing, dancing, and plays are performed almost exclusively by girls while competitive team sports and games are the prerogative of boys. Thereafter, playful interaction between the sexes becomes more and more infrequent. The main reason for this is that older children inherit their folklore from adults, and, since that folklore has been previously divided into two, the children receive it in a sexually differentiated form. This process is subject to great variation among nations and periods with reference to age differences; the Hungarian case provides an unusually extreme example.

SUMMARY

The division of labor between sexes and age groups is one of the ancient conditions of social production that is valid not only in classless (primitive) societies but in class societies as well. Accordingly, social groups are divided on the basis of both sex and age. Because folklore reflects reality not directly but indirectly through society, it is also structured according to sex and age groups. This bipartite world in the case of folklore does not mean that one of the sexes is, or was, the exclusive creator of some branch of art, genre, or type (the question of origin must be left aside for now), but it does mean that the genres and types correlated with the dominant sex were at the same time *the* socially recognized dominant genres and types. (This dominance was, then, manifested not only structurally but functionally.)

As soon as common participation of the two sexes can be traced, an exchange begins; this might be continuous and mutual in that both sexes simultaneously educate their spiritual children. Thus a real circulation begins, but the connection with the immediately preceding sex will linger on. It is a fundamental rule that the sex that is in a more disadvantageous position preserves tradition for a longer time. Generally the exchange does not mean mechanical copying but rather versatile adaptation. In spite of this, all the common productions and genres of the two sexes will continue to display evidence of sexual primacy because temporal, spatial,

and other kinds of subordination remain valid techniques of the process of "mutual effect." This bipartite world of folklore is established at the moment of the termination of childhood; it is reunited only in modern times in love genres that do not depend on sex.

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The Production of Aesthetic Values

PETER JAY NEWCOMER

This essay finds its basic statement in Marx's remark (1955 [1847]:96) that "the relations of production of every society form a whole." It is to this whole that the constituent parts and historical productions of any society must be related by the scientist. If we do not understand this totality, the principles by which people relate to one another in the social production of their lives, then "the fetishistic relations of the isolated parts appear as a timeless law valid for every human society" (Lukács 1971 [1922]:9). In this passage Lukács is criticizing the tendency, inherent in our society, to regard "the facts" of any situation as *the situation.* Bourgeois art, in this, becomes representative of and stands for all art and indeed for all aesthetic possibilities. But the facts are not the process by which they were brought into being. Seeing them as such involves a failure of method (which Lukács sees as the hallmark of all Western science), the failure to understand the social conditions, "the relations of production," under which *any* human achievement takes place. So in the current vulgarizations of the sociobiologists, we see "violence" being defined as "the problem," this being divorced from the process of social production of that violence. We are led to see "population" as the problem, disregarding the reasons why *people* have become the locus of present difficulties. What is needed, then, is not further study of "the facts," but an understanding of the processes which cause social facts to be what they are.

These seem to me to be the kinds of reasons why a criticism of art, a real understanding of it, can proceed only insofar as the critique is able to lay bare the process by which the art is produced. What are, in other words, the social relations under which artistic production takes place? What is the totality to which we have to relate the fragments we have of man's aesthetic production?

Phrased in this way, one can see immediately that the question has no single answer valid for the whole of the human race throughout its history. In any society it is the totality of these social relations of production (including their history) which has made the concrete reality of art what it is. The organization of aesthetic production is the same as the organization of all other production; as Ernst Fischer remarks, "art is a form of work" (1959:15). It is a form of social production, organized and brought into being by a particular constellation of social relations. As Marx says in his article "Critique of political economy," which is reprinted in Arthur (1970:125), "When we speak of production, we always have in mind production at a definite stage of social development. . . ." It is, then, as foolish to speak of "artistic production" in general as it is to speak of *any* production without specification of the conditions under which the production takes place. The failure of nineteenth-century political economy to pay attention to this caveat was what produced Marx's critique in the first place, and art critics/historians have made no progress since. They assume bourgeois social conditions for the production of all art, asserting the ageless nature of great themes in art and literature, engaging in completely ahistorical discussions of the relation of the artist to society, and the like.

As Marx demonstrates in his 1859 "Introduction," the mode of production presupposes a definite mode of consumption: "An objet d'art creates a public that has artistic taste and is able to enjoy beauty, and the same can be said of any other product. Production accordingly produces not only an object for the subject but also a subject for the object" (Arthur 1970:133). In Marx's relational view of things, then, production *is* consumption; for aesthetics to exist as a process, there must be artists, art work, and consumers with a set of standards or values. The values which artists produce are aesthetic values.

Having passed from art through production to value, we are now in a position to prosecute the inquiry with some rigor. Implicit throughout Marx's work is the notion that value is a human creation and that value makes its appearance at a definite stage of history.[1] Startling as this may at first appear, some reflection will show its reasonableness. The bourgeois political economy that we have all absorbed with our mothers' milk states that value is created by scarcity (and hence its economics studies the allocation of scarce goods, makes price dependent upon supply, etc.). Imagine, however, trying to place a value upon something that no one can appropriate; what is the "value" of a sunset? The absurdity of the idea is readily apparent. It is not, then mere scarcity which creates values, but the ability of some to alienate or appropriate the necessities of life — the products of others. Since such values are created by the application of

[1] Amin (1973) contains a systematic presentation of this idea.

labor to nature, all value has alienated labor as its essence; as Bertall Ollman puts it, "value is the most abstract form of alienated labor" (1971:246). In thinking of all forms of value, then, "as Spinoza clearly expresses it, we desire nothing because it is good, but it is good only because we desire it" (Santayana 1896:18). The fact that we desire it, of course, refers to the fact that it is alienable; people cannot want things that are un-havable. If one cannot have something, it cannot be a value. Primitive societies embody such production without "values" as we know them.

"PRIMITIVE" ART

By this is meant the aesthetic productions of classless societies. By "classless" is meant societies in which no one is able to alienate the production of others; "class" refers here to the social relation of exploitation, not to any vague notion of rank or hierarchy of relative status.

The central question in any inquiry about any art must be: "are aesthetic values present and if so, how are they produced?" Pursuing this, it seems clear that aesthetic values exist as such only by virtue of their separation from other values. An aesthetic value, then, is not a utilitarian value; it is something new and/or different. Do classless societies make such a separation? Do "primitive" people have a category of aesthetic as opposed to other sorts of things?[2]

Anthropology is not rich in empirical discussion of the question. Schneider (1971) asserts that the Pakot distinguish between the "utilitarian" and the "aesthetic" but the remainder of his article appears to demonstrate the reverse. In personal aesthetics, for instance, Pakot admire women with firm breasts and good teeth — eminently functional attributes in a society structured by lineage with its high priority on reproductive power. Pakot men find cattle beautiful, whereas women enthuse over green fields of eleusine, each sex thus finding its aesthetic pleasures in areas of production it controls. In sum, Schneider finds "beauty inherent in unique or unusual objects such as strangely woven baskets, unusually carefully built houses, or the [non-functional] lip on the milk pot" (1971:60). Schneider comes to the real crux of the argument when he tells his reader that the Pakot do not have functionless items. Their "beautiful" things are therefore additives to or embellishments of utilitarian items, and the Pakot clearly do not participate in a category of production which can be separated as "aesthetic." "Primitive" people can certainly distinguish between better and worse produc-

[2] The discussion in Crust (1975) of this question is the best I have seen.

tion but this distinction neither expresses a class relation nor is it the basis for a category of production.

ART AND INEQUALITY

Art is labor of a special sort — labor which creates a new reality by reflecting upon, reworking, the present world. Instead of merely transforming the materials of nature as do other crafts, it uses those materials to transform our understanding of things.

As a special category of production, aesthetics demands a division of labor deep enough to set its producers apart as such, and so to set their products apart as a special variety of creation, one which cannot exist in "primitive" society. The argument here is that without the social designation "artist" there can be no category of "art."

There can be little doubt that the history of art begins with that of exploitation. It is the power of a ruling class to determine the division of labor in society. That ability began historically with the *creation* of a division of labor. It is the appearance of *power*, of some individuals over others, in other words, which enables some to cause others to adopt productive tasks which differ from one another, which are more or less specialized. Such power, of course, extends to the appropriation of the product, so art and alienation are born together.

While exploitative societies have occupied less than one percent of human history, the experience of exploitation dominates our consciousness so completely that it seems to many an integral part of "human nature." If we are to counter such notions and replace them with sound science and a fundamentally different future, we need to objectify all our present social relations, especially those concerned with aesthetic values. Only when one sees clearly the process by which we produce can those relations be changed in a scientific manner — all other impulses to change are wishes, value judgments, "oughts."

Thorstein Veblen (1953 [1899] referred to a phenomenon he called "conspicuous consumption" which he related to "pecuniary standards." He was making the point that people appear to enjoy showing off their wealth. Veblen, however, was content to leave the inquiry at a superficial level and never went on to investigate how it is that the process of class emulation and struggle that goes on continuously in exploitative societies creates the aesthetic standards of those societies.

One's social being is expressed in production and consumption. Conspicuous consumption, however, has the effect of removing the individual from one class and placing him, temporarily at least, in another. On one level, it is a kind of acting-out, but the point is that the person who participates in the aesthetics of class society is trying to say something,

that he or she has contact with or is part of the class which can alienate the labor of others. Under these conditions it is easy to see why fashions move downwards through class society rather than the reverse.[3]

As Santayana has pointed out, to the members of class society, desirable objects are beautiful ones. "Beauty" is simply the response which an individual consciousness makes to something it desires. Desire in class society is based most profoundly upon the wish to change one's relations with others, to move upward socially in the bourgeois variant. How the transformation from desire to beauty is effected in the human psyche is probably not knowable, but it seems clear that such an equation is performed. In short, the facts of social structure determine those of culture, and the individual's consciouness is shaped by the standards of culture. The relevant fact of social structure is class. The fact of culture is a set of symbols that express the dynamics of these divisions. The psychology of desire involves, among other things, the creation of aesthetic values at the level of individual and cultural standards.

In the United States today, suntans are thought attractive, yet 150 years ago the opposite was the case; in those days, a brown face and body were not beautiful or desirable. I know of no way to explain this shift except to say that it was caused by the removal of the locus of work from out-of-doors in the early nineteenth century, to indoors in the twentieth century. A tan now shows that one is able to avoid productive work (and live on something else) long enough to get one. In the nineteenth century, being pale showed the same thing. Interestingly, subcategories of value within the suntan aesthetic show the same process at work: winter tans are more highly valued than brownness in summer (this involves the expense of travel as well as of leisure). Again, evenness of tan is valued: it shows that one was doing nothing while tanning; construction workers do not get an even tan. All-over tans require the consumption of large amounts of space; sunning oneself in the nude demands a privacy not to be found on cheap beaches. Yet somehow our perception of a suntan is an aesthetic perception, not mere money valuation. We have created a standard without knowing anything about the process by which it was created.

In a Chinese example, the "lotus foot" was produced by binding young girls' feet during the period of growth so that the adult foot reached only about half of its normal size. This was thought very attractive by the Chinese, who also saw that such feet implied a life of leisure for their half-crippled owners. These women could therefore be kept only by men of some wealth; the wives' helplessness effectively demonstrated their husbands' ability to provide. The Vietnamese, with characteristic

[3] This is most noticeable in capitalist society. In a social formation involving caste-like divisions, it seems that this tendency should be less pronounced.

ingenuity, have modified the permanent effects of such physical alterations and express the same relation through clothing; their long dresses, the *aó-dài*, have long tails on the blouses which hang down to within inches of the ground. In a land where productive work goes on in muddy rice paddies, such clothing says a lot.

Somewhat further removed lies the American woman's concern with softness of the hands, which implies, of course, that their possessor has either servants or machinery to take care of household tasks. American men's hands, by contrast, are though most attractive when firm or hard. In the world of office work, men with such hands have the leisure to engage in shopwork or do-it-yourself home maintenance. Again, in parts of the world where real productive (and alienated) labor takes a physical form, one finds soft hands highly valued among men.

It seems plain that the recent fad of dieting is the result of the same process. Cheap food makes one fat whereas high-protein, special dietetic foods, and leisure for exercise are necessary for most Americans to remain slim much past puberty. Most dieters can testify that it costs more to stay thin than to put on weight. Here once more the cross-cultural corollary holds as well: in societies whose members are chronically undernourished, fatness is highly regarded aesthetically. In these groups, men who have the means tend to prefer women who are fat.

The wider generalization suggested is that aesthetics always come from the same place that wealth does. The Vietnamese and Japanese women who underwent plastic surgery to have their eyes rounded and their noses lengthened are thus making two statements about themselves: (a) they are Westernized enough to appreciate Western good looks (which conflict radically with local ideals); and (b) they have the money to spend. One can also speculate that if the United States were invaded, conquered, and occupied by African armies, some of the new enthusiasms in personal aesthetics would include darkening of skin, permanent waves with very small curlers, and plastic surgical modification of noses and lips. It is also now possible to see why blacks in America used to imitate white physical features — hair straighteners and bleaching creams make one look like the rulers. Black can never be really beautiful in white racist society, but the fact that resistance to simple mimicking of whites has begun is encouraging.

We can see now why such American cultural items as Coca-Cola, cigarettes, and much of our other plastic effluvia have had such a tremendous acceptance throughout the Third World. The aesthetics of the objects themselves means nothing. Neither do local standards, which are steamrollered. The beauty of American junk, and its fantastic appeal, is caused solely by the wealth and power of America, which Americans and their possessions represent. People identify with America through their

possession of American things and values. These are desired, embraced, thought beautiful.

A NOTE ON METHOD AND POLITICS

The point to be made in this brief essay is that our culture has lost its bearings aesthetically. We have lost control of the production of aesthetic values and our values now confront us; we are controlled by them, not understanding that we ourselves produced them. This is nothing more than the aesthetic aspect of the problem of capitalist production in general. Production, once geared to human needs, has now taken precedence over those needs and creates needs. Our aesthetic needs in class society are not under our control. Our creation of them takes place under circumstances which we do not control, and the form of production of our ideas is not even subject to our understanding. Most people do not know why they like what they like, any more than they understand why they produce what they produce in the material realm. No social system exists in which one aspect of life makes sense while the others are mysterious. It seems clear that straightening out our aesthetics requires more than an act of will. If the history of the last decade is any lesson, it certainly says volumes about the efficacy of changing the world by gazing inward. Anyone can see that our aesthetics and our production in general serve only the needs of capital, that the "free-enterprise system" produces not only confusion about what is socially necessary (the critique of the forties and fifties) but the *opposite* of what people need. War, junk food, and supersonic transport correspond to fine arts which exemplify the meaninglessness of life for all classes.

There are many grounds upon which one may reject capitalism. In it, one's schooling and work are oppressive, one is exploited economically, and life is ever more nasty, brutish, and short. It is a society in which the promises of the ruling class have become not the precursors of reality but the opposite of what we see. Thus our art is visually repellent, architecture serves only to waste space and materials, and in our everyday life we must appear to one another always as what we are not, never as what we are. These things are clear, to one extent or another, to most people whose vision is not hopelessly clouded by their "work" in the extraction of surplus value.

As remarked above, however, one confronts capitalism as a ready-made existent reality, in its aesthetic dimension as well as others, in which one must participate in one way or another. So the process of rejection is to some degree a process of self-criticism. This does not refer to some form of white liberal guilt. It means that when one undertakes the long task of objectifying one's social relations — of seeing what it is that has

made us what we are — there will be some parts of ourselves that we will see as having been made for us by a process we did not understand at the time. Our aesthetics is definitely one category which will undergo some shocks as a result of this process. In it, one learns that both the creator and perceiver of things bestow beauty and meaning, that things have beauty and meaning only insofar as they point to relations between people that are desirable.

It is this that creates the ugliness and alienation of our present aesthetics and it is up to us to create a successor to that aesthetics. It is only in the context of this struggle that aesthetic values can have meaning in the age of imperialism. This is not to "put art in the service of politics" in any vulgar Zhdanovist sense; the point is that if one's life is political and progressive, one's aesthetics will be also.

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The Conscience of the West: Job and the Trickster

STANLEY DIAMOND

The Book of Job, generated by an archaic civilization, a society no longer primitive, symbolizes the converse of the primitive notion of the trickster and also represents the origin of our own conceptions of good and evil. It is, so to speak, an ideological pillar of our civilization. This is casually implied in *Primitive man as philosopher* (1927), where Paul Radin contrasts an African folk tale with the conclusion of the Book of Job.

In this tale, the heroine is trapped in an analogue of Job's dilemma:

> She was an old woman of a family with a long genealogy. Leza [the high God of the Ba-ila], "the Besetting-One," stretched out his hand against the family. He slew her mother and father while she was yet a child, and in the course of years all connected with her perished. She said to herself, "Surely I shall keep those who sit on my thighs." But no, even they, the children of her children, were taken from her. She became withered with age and it seemed to her that she herself was about to be taken. But no, a change came over her; she grew younger. Then came into her heart a desperate resolution to find God and to ask the meaning of it all. Somewhere up there in the sky must be his dwelling. She began to cut down trees, joining them together and so planting a structure that would reach heaven. Finally she gave up in despair, but not her intention of finding God. Somewhere on earth there must be another way to heaven! So she began to travel, going through country after country, always with the thought in her mind: "I shall come to where the earth ends and there I shall find a road to God and I shall ask him: "What have I done to thee that thou afflictest me in this manner?" She never found where the earth ends, but though disappointed she did not give up her search, and as she passed through the different countries they asked her, "What have you come for, old woman?" And the answer would be, "I am seeking Leza." "Seeking Leza! For what?" "My brothers, you ask me! Here in the nations is there one who suffers as I have suffered?" And they would ask again, "How have you suffered?" "In this way. I am alone. As you see me, a solitary old woman; that is how I am!" And they answered, "Yes, we see. That is how you are! Bereaved of friends and husband? In what do you differ from others? The Besetting-One sits on the back of every one of us and we cannot shake him off!" She never obtained her desire: she died of a broken heart.

The point of the tale, as Radin indicates, is that one must come to terms with the realities of the world; anything short of this invites spiritual destruction, symbolized by the death of the old woman. Thus, a "broken heart" is equivalent to a deeply moral (not merely ethical) failure. Among primitive peoples, the belief in God or the "supernatural" is not connected with the hope of other-worldly reward; "heaven" is the double of earth. Religion never functions as a means of evading the moral contradictions that must be confronted in this world. Radin contrasts the integrity of the primitive tale with the embarrassing denouement felicity of the Book of Job — Job restored to health, property, and domestic felicity over and above his original affluence. Radin has in mind, of course, a primitive culture in which the peculiar delusions and pathologies of civilization have not yet become evident.

Radin does not discuss the substance of the Book of Job at all, nor does he elaborate on the curiously civilized failure of the old woman. That failure may be defined as the refusal to understand and accept the relationship between good and evil, and its expression in human ambiguity. The principle of ambivalence is incorporated into the myths and rituals of primitive peoples to an extraordinary degree and in a variety of ways which need no explication here. Radin himself has provided us with endless examples of the theme. That principle or rather *personification* of ambivalence (since we are dealing with primitive perceptions and not abstract conceptualizations) is most directly realized in the figure of the trickster, as Jung, Kerényi, and Radin have sufficiently indicated. With the appearance of civilization, the concrete and ramifying image of the trickster becomes a segregated and vicarious aspect of human experience, acted out by the clown as an entertainment. At the same time, it is epitomized abstractly in the civilized assumption that evil, reified, befalls good men. Put another way, the concrete image of the trickster is suppressed and simultaneously transformed into the problem of injustice. The circus that surrounds and depends upon the clown is therefore the diminished setting for a moral struggle. The grotesque inversions of the clown, the defiance of death, the terrifying reality that seems to overflow the ring itself only to recede to a totally alien experience the next moment, and the superhuman skill of the actors — these are serious matters indeed. Laughing at a circus demands the capacity to laugh at oneself, to identify with the reversals and risks of identity that take place before our eyes. Wit, laughing at the other, does not work. And this laughing at oneself means accepting the ambivalence of the human condition, for which civilization gives us very little instruction or structured opportunity. Hence, the strange gravity of audiences, particularly the expressions on the faces of children, encountered at circuses.

The Book of Job, like Plato's *Republic* which was composed at roughly the same time, is bent upon denying human ambivalence and social

ambiguity. Thus Job and Plato insist upon the obliteration of injustice. Plato tells us that the Republic is conceived for one major reason: in this world as we know it, there is no remedy for injustice. As Socrates says, many a blackguard goes to his grave with a reputation for virtue and many a virtuous man dies a scoundrel in the public eye. (There is a perfect parallel in Ecclesiastes: "There is a vanity which takes place on earth, that there are righteous men to whom it happens according to the deeds of the wicked, and there are wicked men to whom it happens according to the deeds of the righteous.") Therefore Plato constructs a heavenly city in which the divine and the human reflect one another in complete harmony. Evil is eradicated for God cannot be the author of evil, and the principle of ambiguity is denied. In the Book of Job, there is a parallel effort to understand and come to terms with the blind injustice of the world. If Plato represents the civilized consciousness projected as a utopia and brought to its highest pitch, Job represents the religious conscience of Western civilization, more nakedly expressed than is the case with Plato and with no effort at a social prescription. Plato and Job must be understood with reference to each other; together they explicate the root of western ethics.

In both Plato and Job the relationship between the human and the divine is no longer played out in dramatic form but is orchestrated in imposing intellectual dialogues which rationalize the very basis of our civilization. The one important difference, apart from the distinctions inherent in the cultural styles of Greek and Hebrew, is that Plato will reform the state by making it more perfect in the technical sense of the term, more complete and more omniscient; in Job society is not questioned. But correlatively, the Plato of the *Laws* has abandoned utopia, and obedience to the mundane dictates of society (whose ultimate sanction is divine) is now considered the mark of piety. Job would have made an exemplary citizen of the polity put forward in Plato's *Laws*. In order to understand this more fully, it is necessary to consider the Book of Job in greater detail.

To begin with, Job is rich, blessed and upright — as near perfect a father, husband, and subject of his society and his God as can be imagined. Satan challenges God, claiming Job is good because his life is easy and successful. God accepts the challenge and permits Job to be tormented by the devil in order to test his loyalty to Him. There then follows the first series of manipulated misfortunes. Job's family, excluding his wife, is exterminated. Job's response is, "the Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

Satan then argues further that as long as Job's skin is saved, he will remain loyal to God. This second challenge is also accepted, and God puts Job completely in Satan's hands — the sole *caveat* being that his life be spared. At this point, and for the first time in the work, the relationship

between good and evil is obscured, perhaps deliberately. For God apparently commands Satan, but is distinguished from him, just as evil is becoming segregated as a principle from the principle of good. At the same time, since God can ultimately control Satan, He is (as Calvin was systematically to formulate) omnipotent but not responsible for the evil that men choose to do through the mediation of the devil. At the beginning of the Book of Job, then, the concrete ambivalence of the human condition is denied; good and evil have a dual rather than a single source as in the complex unity of the primitive consciousness. In the Book of Job integrated acts have been disintegrated into contrasting *ideas*; human behavior is now seen as representing and being driven by principles that are abstracted from the reality of actual behavior. Actual behavior is never wholly good nor wholly evil; such purity is never encountered, least of all in primitive societies. It is only with the civilized reversal of principles and persons that such an attitude becomes conceivable; the abstraction becomes a weapon against the person.

Satan afflicts Job from head to foot. As he sits in agony, his wife commends him:

Do you still hold fast your integrity?
Curse God, and die.

She demands, in effect, that Job must bow neither to God nor the devil; one is obliged to remain faithful to the knowledge of oneself. If man is fated to die in misfortune, and if God is responsible for the world as we know it, then die, she admonishes, but curse that kind of God. If one finds it impossible to change one's faith, she implies, then one should have the grace to die — and here we are reminded of the old woman in the Ba-ila tale. Job, of course, dismisses his wife:

Shall we receive good at the hand of God,
and shall we not receive evil?

This sounds like the recognition of ambivalence, but in his continued agony Job pleads for death, wishes that he had never been born and curses *himself.* In so doing, he disavows responsibility for his life, and the insight hinted at is revealed as an abstraction. It should also be noted that Job actively pleads for death, whereas in the Ba-ila tale the old woman inevitably dies of moral ("natural") causes while still denying the ambiguity of life.

The advice of his wife, who represents a totally different, a more primitive perception of reality, is rejected. In Western theology, when not ignored, she has been despised as a second Eve. The Book of Job, then, is best understood as the theological reflection of a patriarchal and theocratic state. The order of society is never seriously put to question; the

resolution of the tale is fully in accord with the status quo. Not a sparrow has to move from its place in order to insure the primacy of God, the structure of society and the piety of the subject. Whereas the Greeks spoke of utopia, the patriarchs guarded the structure of the world as it was; they only wished to clarify its ethical order. But both Greeks and Hebrews were guardians of an order with which we are fully capable of identifying.

After the disappearance of Job's wife, his three friends appear on the scene and, after a preliminary expression of sympathy, engage him in the conversation that carries most of the tale and has caught the attention of the conventional commentators. The pattern of the dialogue is exceedingly simple: each of the friends insists that Job has sinned, for God is just and punishes only for sin. Job is also told that if he bears up, all will end well. God will reward him. Moreover, he is suffering for his own good. As one of them says, "Man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward." Has not Job similarly advised afflicted people?

But Job considers this hypocrisy. Since his friends are not suffering, they lack compassion. He again begs for death:

> What is man, that thou dost make so much of him
> . . . and test him every moment?

The second friend, and one must note that the friends are interchangeable, asserts that Job is being dealt with justly, for God deals with men according to their works. But Job's attention is elsewhere. He is reaching for another rationalization, and responds that God is so much more powerful than man that man's perfection and innocence, even when they exist, must be insufficient, unimpressive and even perverse. Therefore God destroys both the innocent and the wicked, not because that is the nature of the world, but because in the eyes of God all are wicked. This expression of cosmic piety leaves Job in an insoluble dilemma. If he were wicked, he says, then God would certainly punish him. If he were righteous, then he dare not proclaim it because God's judgments are inscrutable. Yet, God made him, and might show him a little mercy before his death because He knows Job is not wicked in the human sense. But this casuistry cuts no ice. Job's third friend repeats the refrain: Job is vain to consider himself a just man, only God knows good and evil and when He punishes it must be for a good reason. Only the wicked hope to die in the face of adversity — the good will live through affliction and be rewarded.

Job again defends himself in front of his friends: he has as much wisdom as they, and it is easy to speak when one is not suffering. God, says Job, is omnipotent, He creates and destroys for reasons beyond human comprehension. Here again one catches a glimpse of the image of God as a trickster, that is to say, of the principle of ambivalence and of the relation-

ship between good and evil, perhaps even of their personification. That is the primitive substratum in the consciousness of Job. In the words of Radin, the trickster is "creator and destroyer, giver and negator" knowing "neither good nor evil yet . . . responsible for both."

But this perspective is too dizzying, and Job reverses himself. He begs God to reveal the nature of his iniquity; though God slay him, he will trust in Him and, moreover, he will maintain his own ways before Him. That is, he will argue his innocence before God. He will argue that he has been obedient to the spirit and the letter of the law. But his friends reply that man is by nature wicked, an idea that has also occurred to Job; therefore, how can Job insist on his innocence, which is no more than his lack of knowledge of having sinned. Job scorns them for their lack of mercy and continues to claim that he is innocent in his own eyes. His friends reply that he is presumptuous and impatient. Job then despairs of them along with, in the passion of his suffering, his family. God is torturing him for unknown reasons, he replies. (And this is truer than he is ever to be permitted to understand.) His friends, he continues, desert him when they insist that he is undergoing a just punishment, and he warns them of retribution.

But they prove relentless, and Job finally responds that the wicked often go unpunished in this world, giving many examples of this state of affairs. In so doing, he not only unwittingly questions his own implicit conviction of the connection between piety and worldly reward, but his more recently stated belief that God punishes the wicked only. He also asserts what the Book has ostensibly set out to question: Why do the just suffer and the wicked flourish? And so the dialogue comes to a close, Job seeking sympathy and defending his behavior, his friends accusing him of impudence, perfidy, hypocrisy, and self-righteousness.

There are two related observations that should be made about the role of Job's friends. They are not only interchangeable but are interchangeable with Job himself. In the first instance, they comprise an intellectual chorus revealing different aspects of the same argument, constantly reinforcing each other and representing, as a chorus, the conscience of the dialogue, which is no more than the conscience of Job. The structure of the argument is almost musical: Job makes a point and his friends make the counterpoint. They then reverse the contrapuntal progression from a necessarily limited repertoire of logical possibilities. For there is nothing that Job's friends say that Job himself has not said. They have, for example, advised him to endure, assured him that God is just, and predicted that all good men are eventually rewarded. They have also made the subtle point that in God's eyes even the just among men are unjust, thereby excusing Job by rendering his misinterpretation of his own behavior inevitable. They have suggested, finally, that he walk more humbly before God, anticipating the argument of Elihu. It is, therefore, a

curious theological mistake to distinguish Job from his friends. They are in opposition not on principle, but only because of an "accidental" reality.[1] It is exactly here that their lack of freedom, individuality, and humanity is evident. And that leads to the second observation. In a society such as that reflected in the Book of Job, men could no longer spontaneously turn to their friends and peers and confront the acknowledged absurdities of life as members of complexly related, reciprocating kin or quasi-kin groups. Job's relationship to his friends is one of classic alienation. They are his friends only in the sense that they are of equivalent status and class. The paradox is that the common values that motivate Job and his friends make it impossible for them to rely on each other or even to understand each other in their extreme moments even though, or rather because, they speak the same language. The friends of Job *must* adopt the attitudes they do in order to rationalize their own positions, which are equivalent before his disaster and potentially equivalent following his disaster. For how else can they maintain their faith in the correctness of their ways?

Contrast this with the institution of *best friend* in indigenous Dahomey, a protostate or early archaic civilization in West Africa. Each Dahomean had three best friends, arming him against the restrictions imposed by the civil power in this transitional society. The function of best friend is clearly revealed in the following folk tale. It seems that a man was asked to help work the fields of his diviner, his father-in-law, and his best friend on the same day. Faced with this dilemma, since aid could hardly be refused anyone, he went out into the bush. There he killed an animal. He then went to his father-in-law's house and told him he had killed a man. The father-in-law shouted, "I don't want to hear about it! I don't want to hear anything about it! You killed one of the king's men and now you want to hide here? I don't want to hear anything about it!" So the hunter left and went to the house of the diviner, where he repeated his story. The diviner said, "Ah, we can have nothing more to do with each other. Today you killed a man belonging to the king, and now you want to come here to hide. Go! You cannot hide in my house!" Now the hunter went to the house of his best friend and told him, "I wanted to kill an antelope for you . . . but as I shot at it I shot a man." The best friend asked him if he had told anyone. Then they left the house, the best friend carrying his bow,

[1] Even so advanced a critic as Morros Jastrow — by now himself a classic — insists upon interpreting Job's contradictions as priestly distortions of an "original" text. He would, therefore, deny the paradoxical structure, which is the real esthetic strength of the work, and the sources of its terrifying honesty. For it thereby stands as a faithful expression of the spirit of the times. One should approach a text such as the Book of Job head on — its meaning for us is a deeper question than the issue of textual "authenticity," which can never be established, perhaps not even in the minds of the "original authors." Certain critics seem to be more interested in creating their own Job than in listening carefully to what the "standard" Job has to say — and considering the pattern of the whole work relative to that.

and went out into the bush to hide the body. Of course, the best friend soon discovered that it was not a man at all, but an antelope. So he asked the hunter why he had claimed to kill a man. And the answer was, "I wanted to know which of the three — friend, father-in-law, diviner — one could follow unto death." Then they both went to work in the best friend's field, the dilemma solved. That is why, the Dahomeans say, a man must be always closest to his best friend.

The key to an understanding of the Book of Job, then, is in the triumph of orthodoxy; the work is an awe-inspiring rationalization of God's ambivalent nature. And the abstract recourse to principle, punishment, reward, and God-as-a-concept reflects the patriarchal, theocratic polity — as the antithesis of the classless, ambivalently structured cultures of primitive peoples.

Almost as an afterthought, and it may well have been that, the conclusion of the Book of Job emerges. Whether or not it was an afterthought, the climax of Job is the inevitable outcome of the thrust and conception of the work as a whole. A young man (Elihu) appears and lectures Job on the omnipotence of God. God is not to be approached on the human level. Why should Job demand to know his sins? God must be approached in humility. Although Elihu sympathizes with Job, in contrast to the increasing harshness of his (Job's) friends, his intellectual differences with them are trivial. The Lord approves and, speaking out of a whirlwind, reveals the scope of His achievements: He made the world, creation is His, can Job question such power? Can Job dare to measure his notion of justice against all this? But again, the propositions of the Lord are not substantially different from conclusions reached by Job's principled friends, by Elihu, and by Job himself. They are cogs in the same social conscience.

Job now abhors himself; he prostrates himself before God and asks forgiveness for his blasphemy which originated, it would appear, in his all too human pride. In response, God humbles the friends of Job for their hypocrisy and their presumption in claiming to know His ways, and for their lack of confidence in Job. For Job, in the judgment of the Lord, never lost faith in a humanly understandable justice. This apparent contradiction aside, the theological "tragedy" ends happily. Job lives for another 140 years, and so on. In both Plato and Job, it should be noted, the abolition of injustice depends on the obliteration of ambivalence, and the obliteration of ambivalence is the death of tragedy. The Book of Job is in no sense a tragedy but something very different, a theodicy, an apology for the projection of a certain concept of God.

One can finally understand why Radin preferred the African folk tale. It is harder to decide whether or not Satan won his argument, for at its critical moments the basically civilized tale of Job depends on a *deus ex machina* — the evil that has befallen Job is simply assumed to be the work

of the devil and in the end Job is redeemed from on high. Both God and the devil are at an infinite and dissociated remove from human experience, and this reflects the structure of civilization. Conversely, among primitive peoples, all antinomies are bound into the ritual cycle. The sacred is an immediate aspect of man's experience. Good and evil, creation and destruction — the dual image of the deity as expressed in the trickster — are used in the network of actions that define primitive society. Therefore moral fanaticism, based as it is on abstract notions of pure good, pure evil, and the exclusive moral possibility or fate of any particular individual — what may be called moral exceptionalism — is absent among primitive people. In primitive perspective, human beings are assumed to be capable of any excess. But every step of the way, the person is held to account for those actions that seriously threaten the balance of society and nature.

Even while creating their myths and ceremonials, their meanings and their insights, primitive people are aware of the reality that they mold. Radin (1927) tells us that a Maori witness before a native land-court in New Zealand stated in the course of certain testimony:

"The God of whom I speak is dead."
The court replied:
"Gods do not die."
"You are mistaken," continued the witness. "Gods do die,
unless there are *tohungas* [priests] to keep them alive."

And in a Maori myth, one God advises another: "When men no longer believe in us, we are dead." That reflects the existential, the created reality of the primitive world. There can be no deeper antithesis to the Book of Job, which can be taken as a towering metaphor for the determinism of civilization; most specifically for the conscience of western culture.

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PART SIX

Some Academic and Bourgeois Illusions

The Revolutionary Potential of the Mexican Peasant

ARTURO WARMAN

In most strands of contemporary intellectual thought the peasantry is viewed as a sector of the population which is in a process of disintegration and for which there is no historical alternative to extinction. It is rather disturbing to realize that this notion is shared by most of the powerful groups vying with one another for the right to establish a blueprint for the future organization of society. The theoreticians of capitalist development — who may be discredited intellectually but are still decisive in the establishment of "free world" policies — see the agricultural enterprise as the historical successor to the peasantry. In Marxist thought the agricultural proletarian is viewed as the successor to the traditional peasant. At this stage I am interested in emphasizing one point: both of these groups share the same social model of the organization of production — the industrial one; what they differ on is the form of property and, consequently, the distribution of production.

This agreement upon the industrial model as the only future alternative for the social organization of labor leaves the peasant on a level of evolution which has already been surpassed as a remnant, and in that sense, as an anomaly. The peasant is conceived of as conservative, rooted in a traditional world and determined to preserve it. With the exception of Third World activists such as Fanon (1963), no one has recognized the peasant's revolutionary potential. Furthermore, the peasant is said to be incapable of modifying his own condition, much less that of his society, unless he is forced to do so by external factors. The peasant is assigned a tactical role in major social changes, but he is denied any strategic importance.

These intellectual perspectives, which can hardly be called theoretical frameworks, seem inappropriate for analyzing the so-called underdeveloped nations, which should be regarded as agrarian nations rather

than backward industrial emporiums. This paper will attempt to criticize these perspectives using contemporary Mexico as a basis for generalizations, however risky this approach may seem.

There have appeared in Mexico recently signs of deep-rooted unrest among the peasants. This is typically manifested by the take-over of privately owned land, backed up sometimes by marches on urban centers to exert political pressure. There are many other less spectacular manifestations of this unrest: conflicts in local elections, occupation of government offices, especially lending agencies, a wave of crime in some areas, and even incipient and chronic guerrilla activities.

In most cases the action appears spontaneous because it occurs outside established political channels, such as regional political parties, "loyal" opposition parties, or revolutionary opposition groups. Almost all the actions revolve around concrete, immediately resolvable issues, which give them a narrowly reformist character. Besides, the peasants have not succeeded in mobilizing the support of other sectors of the society; on the contrary, their actions seem to set them against and isolate them from other oppressed groups. Under these conditions, the peasant movements have very rapidly become easy victims of repression or co-optation by the state.

Neither the magnitude, extension, or nature of the demands made by the peasant movements seem to pose a serious challenge to the national system. This contrasts with the magnitude and speed of the state's response, which mobilizes all kind of resources against peasant agitation in an apparently disproportionate manner.

The action of the peasants and the reaction of the state can be understood better if they are analyzed on two levels: (1) in terms of the political situation and (2) in terms of the structural position of the peasantry within the larger society. The overlapping of the two levels places peasant agitation, even in its most incipient forms, within a revolutionary context.

It is possible to outline in simple terms some of the crucial conditions which give the peasant movements their revolutionary character, without claiming that this outline is complete, that it places them in their order of importance, or that it explains the causes of these phenomena; this might well be the object of a different study.

It seems evident that the ruling coalition shows signs of internal division. The principal conflict centers around the control of resources by the government and by private entrepreneurs. It should be noted that the Mexican government is itself an entrepreneur, perhaps the most powerful in the country; however, its conflict with private enterprise is not the result of strict entrepreneurial competition but rather of Mexican fiscal policy. The fiscal assets of the country are derived principally from taxation of earned income, as well as from general sales taxes and tariffs

on foreign trade, that is to say, on consumption; profits are virtually unaffected in practice. The state attempts to obtain large fiscal resources in order to maintain itself as a bureaucracy and to maintain the rhythm of national development through public investment, but private entrepreneurs have successfully resisted all attempts at large-scale fiscal reform.

Part of the state's inability to effect a major fiscal reform is explained by the political divisions which have arisen among various sectors of the government itself. Some aspects of this conflict can be explained in terms of alliances between sectors of the government and the entrepreneurs, but others arise from the expansion of spheres of power and control within the state. This internal conflict flourishes in the divisions among the corporate sectors which make up the political party which controls the state apparatus, the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI). The PRI is supposed to be based on three groups: the workers, the peasants, and the so-called "popular sector" which is so broad that it includes the entrepreneurs.

The divisions within the ruling coalition do not appear to provide a serious threat to the system. It seems that the forces working for unity are stronger than those leading to fragmentation; this unity can be seen in the monolithic nature of the response to demands generated outside the political system. Hansen (1971) has aptly dubbed the monolith the "*cosa nostra*." But it is also apparent that the divisions within the ruling coalition have lessened the degree of centralization of power. Presidential power, which was previously almost absolute has diminished. The same thing has happened to the national leadership of the Institutional Revolutionary Party. Independent power centers have appeared within the government and among its allies.

This division of power has opened up new possibilities for independent action. Two groups have taken advantage of this situation: the peasants and the students. Other groups which have objective reasons for mobilizing have remained passive. Workers, the "middle classes," and the "urban marginals," with some notable exceptions, have not developed independent movements but have stayed within the corporate structure of the official party.

In the process of internal division and of confronting the system from the outside, other forces have appeared with a potential for independent action vis-à-vis the groups and channels which make up the existing political monopoly. Of these forces two rather different groups stand out: the army, which since 1968 has been a critical institution in political life; and the church, especially its "progressive" wing which has a greater potential for mobilization than other groups, and which has timidly taken a more active role in political life. None of these groups has developed programs or activities outside the established political channels, but the

simple recognition of their existence is an additional discordant element within the existing power monopoly.

The internal divisions in the existing power coalition, its confrontation with independent movements, and the appearance of new political forces have created a crisis in the Mexican political system. It is within this framework that independent political actions like those of the peasants, take on a broader significance than their magnitude and power or the nature of the demands that they embody would suggest.

On the other hand, the crisis in the political system is intimately linked with the appearance of a structural crisis in the socioeconomic system. We shall analyze this crisis taking the peasants as the point of reference. This will permit us to evaluate on a second level the alternative lines of political action open to the peasants and the implications of these alternatives.

It seems appropriate at this point to define the term "peasants" as it is used in this paper. We shall rely on the work of Eric Wolf (1966) to a large extent. The peasant unit of production is the family which is also the unit of consumption. This fact determines the principal objective of production: self-sufficiency, which is what distinguishes peasant units from enterprises whose production is oriented toward a wide market. But the peasantry is part of a larger social unit, which is what distinguishes it from primitive social groups. The larger society, depending on its nature, establishes different types of relationships of dominance which are asymmetrical in character, and through which the peasant is deprived of all his productive surplus above a level of subsistence which is socially established. The transfer of peasant "surplus" tends to keep this social group in a stationary position.

The extraction of the surplus prevents the peasant from accumulating and creating capital reserves. The vacuum is supplemented by the presence of social ties of cooperation among family units. Through systems of cooperation they are able to gather and accumulate greater resources than would be possible for isolated units of production. In other words, this cooperation, which is a synchronic process, supplements accumulation, which is an historical process. The mechanisms of cooperation and redistribution unite productive family units in a broader system such as the neighborhood, the *ejido*, kinship groups, or some other form of community that handles the collective resources and makes production possible. Generally, the community has a certain degree of dominance over a territory and this guarantees that the productive units have access to it; this then becomes a collective patrimony, although it may be distributed unequally.

In this sense one can speak of a "peasant mode of production" which has its own characteristic social relations. These can be analyzed on three levels. On the first level, the family as the unit of production and con-

sumption has a high level of autonomy in the mobilization of its resources to ensure its subsistence. On the second level, that of the community, relationships of cooperation and redistribution make production possible by bringing together collective resources as a substitute for capital. On the third level, the peasant is subjected to asymmetrical relationships of exploitation, which deprive him of his productive surpluses by means of systems of dominance and mechanisms of accumulation that tie him to the larger, more powerful society.

In Mexico, the theoretical model of the peasant society is enmeshed in the peculiar historical process which began with the revolution of 1910 in which the peasants played such an enormously important part. Two aspects of this process particularly affect the model: agrarian reform as a national policy and accelerated economic development in pursuit of industrialization. These factors have led to the establishment of sets of relationships among Mexican peasants which differ from the theoretical model without invalidating it.

These processes have contributed greatly to the differentiation of resources such as labor, land, capital, and technology which the peasant used to use in a direct and undifferentiated way. Now those resources have to be acquired and supplied through separate commercial channels as commodities. This process has "alienated" the peasant from the process of production, as Wolf states (1969:279–280).

Nevertheless, alienation has not changed the peasant into a proletarian. The Mexican peasant depends for subsistence on a combination of family labor and access to land through participation in an agrarian community. He is able to subsist to the extent that he can hold back part of his effort and his resources from the commercialization process. The Mexican peasant continues to be, at bottom, a peasant in terms of his structural position within the larger society.

At the autonomous family level it seems more and more evident that the majority of Mexican peasants are not capable of creating a productive surplus as farmers and, in many cases, do not even succeed in producing at subsistence level. Some sources estimate that 80 percent of the agricultural holdings in the country do not produce enough to keep one family (CDIA: vol. 1, p. 89) although they do almost always succeed in producing the basic element of their diet, corn, in quantities nearly adequate for self-sufficiency. Apparently, the principal reason for this productive insufficiency is the increasing demographic pressure on the land. While the population of the peasant sector doubled between 1940 and 1965, the cultivatible land to which it had access increased by not quite 50 percent. In order to increase the amount of productive land available, the peasant began cultivating poorer land which yields less; he also had to cultivate fallow land more often, to the detriment of its fertility. The cultivation of marginal land meant the disappearance of pasture that had been used for

maintaining draught animals. These factors contributed to breaking the cycle of fertilization and recuperation which had made the independent cultivation of such land viable; this type of land makes up 90 percent of the land to which the Mexican peasant had access.

Demographic pressure is not the only factor which explains the peasant's inability to create a surplus as an autonomous cultivator. The relationship between the prices of agricultural products and those produced by other sectors has deteriorated continuously. Either the prices of agricultural products have stayed stationary or increased less than the prices of industrial products. The price of corn, the principal peasant product in Mexico, was kept stable for over ten years by government policies. For the peasant, this stable production signified a loss in relation to exchange with other sectors. The volume of peasant production transferred to other sectors was constantly increased by the price mechanism.

Because he had disrupted the ecological cycle, the peasant was forced to resort to using industrially produced capital goods. Chemical fertilizers and chemical insecticides, have become an almost generalized prerequisite for growing crops on marginal land and land that has to be cultivated without fallowing. Because of the expense of maintaining draught animals machinery had to be used in some phases of cultivation. This caused the peasant to lose his technological autonomy, and he now has no control over the know-how and the instruments needed for production. The peasant has to pay for these external elements with money, which again causes him to lose autonomy in that it requires capital, which he has not got. This loss of autonomy implies a further increase in the transfer of surplus. The peasant has to dedicate a major part of the harvest to pay back loans which he has obtained to cover his production costs. He obtains these loans through usury credit at rates of interest greater than 50 percent and sometimes nearer 100 percent. Under those conditions, the Mexican peasant has conserved autonomy only in the mobilization of his own family's manual labor as a productive resource.

The mobilization of manual labor in any production process presupposes access to land. The peasant accomplishes this through participation in an agrarian community. The Mexican agrarian community developed as a result of the revolutionary movement of 1910 and of the process of agrarian reform. This reform returned ownership of the land to the peasant, a right which had been taken away from him by the liberal reform of 1856. On the other hand, the agrarian reform also led to the establishment of a parallel capitalist system of agricultural enterprise based on the ownership of land as a capital asset. A relationship of competition and complementarity was established between the agrarian community and private enterprise sectors.

Capitalist agriculture controls more land than peasant agriculture and has a monopoly over capital and technological resources. This control

enables it to dominate the market in which the peasant has to participate and compete. The agrarian community has lost partially or totally one of its basic functions — providing access to nonfamily resources through cooperation. The nonfamily resources which are needed today, such as chemical products or machinery, are outside the control of the community and cannot be supplied by coordinated effort at the local level. Thus the importance of the agrarian community for the autonomous production of the peasant has decreased.

On the other hand, land ownership has strengthened the agrarian community. Most of the country's labor force is in some way linked to the agrarian community. This labor force is employed either by the business sector of agriculture or by the industrial and service sectors. However, these sectors which depend on direct or indirect participation of this labor force are unable to maintain it, and the workers obtain that part of their subsistence which other sectors cannot provide through their access to land in the agrarian community. By giving this group roots in the countryside and ensuring their subsistence the agrarian community helps to support and contributes to the viability of the national economy. The agrarian community has become the key institution in the country.

Although the peasant has recently stopped producing a surplus as an autonomous cultivator, the mechanisms imposed by the larger society for the appropriation of this type of surplus not only have not disappeared but have become stronger. The systems of dominance, which constitute the third level of analysis, require that the peasant produce an ever increasing surplus and this he is not able to do. On the other hand, the anticipated profit from that surplus has become a prerequisite of the harvest itself, since it is only because of the surplus that it is possible to obtain the technology and capital from which the agrarian community and the peasant family have been deprived. Even with the surrender of this surplus the peasant's harvest continues to be vital. Faced with this situation, the peasant is forced to continuously transfer his only autonomous resource, his labor, to other activities in order to compensate for his inability to produce a surplus as a cultivator. This transfer of the labor force has taken various forms, including peonage or seasonal work in agricultural enterprises or in public works; and crafts or the cultivation of commercial crops under marginal conditions which require a very large amount of labor and produces a lower yield than the agricultural enterprises. In all these activities, the peasants create a surplus which benefits other sectors, in addition to the surplus which they create as cultivators.

This double surplus which the peasant generates has increased the importance of his role within the larger society. The peasant's inability to produce a surplus with his own resources has become the driving force behind industrial development.

Industrialism in Mexico has peculiar features which derive from its

dependent nature. Industry was created in response to the development of productive forces outside of rather than inside the country. It is a process imposed from without, which is irrational in terms of Mexico's national interest.

Industrial production in Mexico is apparently highly diversified. Everything, from cars to cigarette lighters, is produced. It is an industry created to supply the internal market. But the internal market is weak, since at least 50 percent of the population, the peasants, cannot afford to buy most of the articles being produced. On the other hand, the technology which Mexican industry uses was imported from the great industrial centers and is designed to function in an economy of large-scale production. The contradiction between the productive system and the nature of the market is reflected in the high prices of industrial products. Under these conditions, industrial growth depends more on increases in unit prices than on increases in production, a characteristic which has made Mexican industry speculative and has tended to limit its markets even more. The problem has become critical; it has been calculated that half of the country's industrial plant is idle. The alternative for the industrial sector is to expand its markets and shed its speculative character.

There is no possibility of developing Mexican industry by expanding external markets. Mexican industrial production is too costly to compete internationally. Moreover, Mexican firms are often subsidiaries of foreign companies, sometimes entirely dependent on the parent company and sometimes only dependent for technology and trademarks. It is hard to imagine flooding the North American market with cars having a North American brand at double the price.

To develop the internal market is not, however, a simple matter either. The liberal notion that industry would end up by absorbing the greater proportion of the work force has failed. Mexican industry is highly diversified and can supply most manufactured goods for internal consumption, but employs barely 20 percent of the population according to highly optimistic figures. What is even more serious, however, is that each new industry which is established leads to a reduction in the proportion of the population employed. The technology imported from the industrial nations, for logical reasons is increasingly capital-intensive. Every new job in Mexican industry requires a major investment, and the incorporation of more people into industry is limited by lack of capital. The strategy of expanding the market by increasing the number of industrial jobs has been abandoned. Neither can higher industrial wages enlarge the market since the result would be to increase the unit cost of industrial products and add fuel to the inflationary spiral. Besides, the existence of the peasant sector, which is twice the size of the industrial labor force, though its income is seven times less on the average, counteracts any tendency

toward higher industrial wages. The peasantry fulfills the function of keeping industrial wages at a low level.

Neither does the service sector offer any alternative to the development of the industrial market. Its growth has been extraordinary and it accounts for 30 percent of the economically active population and generates almost half of the gross national product. The existence of such a high proportion of individuals who are strictly speaking nonproductive, accentuates the speculative and inflationary spiral. The principal component of the service sector is the government bureaucracy which has been allowed to grow to help compensate for the inability of industry to absorb labor. Similarly, public works projects are periodically launched to increase the number of blue collar jobs. These projects invariably benefit private or state enterprises and lead to increased capitalization rather than to greater use of manual labor. The transitory and palliative character of this policy has not helped solve the problem of the industrial market.

The peasant sector, which accounts for about half of the population, would appear to be crucial to the development of the industrial market, but its structural situation, characterized by the extraction of its surplus in goods and labor, shuts off this alternative. The peasant's surplus supports the entire industrial structure by various means, and without it, the industrial structure would collapse.

The following alternatives should be considered in the light of our argument. First, could the peasants expand the amount of land available for their use? Considering that virtually all the available agricultural land is already in use and divided up according to agrarian legislation, such an expansion would be possible only at the expense of the capitalist agricultural enterprise. But the latter performs an essential function for the industrial sector. It produces goods for export at competitive prices: cotton, coffee, sugar, etc. The foreign exchange which these exports bring in is used to finance the import of capital and technology which industry requires to maintain itself because of its dependent nature. In a recent action peasants demanded higher prices for sugarcane which they were selling to a state-owned refinery; this action which was suppressed with great speed by the Mexican army, highlights the vulnerability of the system in this respect. Another crucial function of the capitalist agricultural enterprise is to convert the surplus generated by agricultural peons into capital which then circulates and is accumulated in the industrial sector (of which the agricultural enterprises form a part).

The viability of these functions of the agricultural enterprise — exporting at competitive prices, supplying the urban market, and capitalizing on peasant surpluses — does not depend on their efficiency, but on the transfer of surplus derived from peasant labor. The success of the agricultural enterprise is closely tied to the peasants' inability to produce as

autonomous cultivators which in turn force them to sell their services in a way which is beneficial to the enterprise.

The redistribution of the land controlled by agricultural enterprises is not a viable solution unless that land continues to fulfill its functions for the industrial sector of the economy. One group within the government maintains that this could be done through collectivization or state ownership along Soviet lines. Discussion of this notion is beyond the scope of this paper; suffice it to say that its implementation would require a different kind of social structure, one which could only be brought about by revolutionary change. Furthermore, this solution would solve some of the problems of the industrial sector but not those of the peasant sector.

Another way of increasing consumption in the peasant sector would be to let the peasant retain the surplus which they are presently obliged to forfeit in anticipation of their harvest. The problem is that this surplus has already been consumed, only partly by the peasants, most of the benefit going to the service sector which looks after the processes of exchange and transfer of surplus. Strictly speaking, this would not lead to increased consumption but to redistribution at the expense of the third sector, which is today one of the largest consumers of industrial goods. Since the service sector constitutes the principal political support of the system, this alternative would imply a general restructuring of socioeconomic relationships, that is to say, a revolutionary change.

The technocratic alternative, which is the most used nowadays, focuses on increasing the productivity of the peasantry through technological improvements. Many experiments have been tried in this area, all with similar results: As long as the peasant does not dispose of any capital, the technological changes will be made with financial resources contributed by other sectors, and it will be the latter which will benefit from the increase in productivity; the peasants' situation would not improve, in fact it might even worsen as new technology begins to replace the manual labor which is their principal resource. Increasing productivity does not make the peasants consumers as long as their structural position does not change. Moreover, to apply this strategy of increasing productivity on a large scale would require an enormous injection of capital and this would necessarily lead to a decrease in industrial investment which would cripple that sector. Since the rate of profit in agricultural enterprises is much lower than in an industry, private enterprise has left this type of investment to the public sector which lacks the resources to develop it profitably although this is its intention at present.

The final alternative might be to alter the terms of exchange between industry and agriculture in favor of the latter. But the existing inequality is the backbone of dependent Mexican industry. Internationally, Mexican industry is subject to a process of decapitalization in favor of the industrial giants. The outlay which industry must make for capital, machinery,

technology, the use of trademarks, etc. is much higher than the rate of industrial growth. This situation would have to be reversed in order to allow for capital accumulation. In industry accumulation is not merely desirable but essential for the continuation of the system. If this process is arrested or slowed down, industry will not only be crippled but will enter upon a crisis. Such a prospect faces Mexican industry at this moment. Its best short-range alternative at this time is to further shift the terms of exchange with the agricultural sector in its favor in order to maintain its rate of capitalization, but it seems evident that the peasant cannot contribute more to that model of industrialization.

Within the structural framework that has just been described, any independent action by the peasants directly conflicts with the maintenance of dependent industrial development and in this sense is clearly revolutionary. Moreover, unlike many political movements in the Third World, the revolutionary nature of peasant mobilization has repercussions beyond national borders.

Industrialism, which appears irrational when analyzed within the framework of a single Third World state, ceases to be an illogical process when it is studied within a broader framework. Dependent industrialism works as a new form of imperialist colonialism converting local natural resources and "native" labor into capital which circulates on a world scale but accumulates in the advanced industrialized nations. Local industries are a substitute for primary interchange in which agricultural areas supplied the raw materials, including agricultural products, and received in return a much smaller proportion of industrial goods. This bias is further emphasized by the tendency for prices of locally produced industrial products to rise as a result of protectionism. Whether through direct investment, capital loans, or the sale of technology, international firms and metropolitan states can increase the yield of their investments and obtain greater profit from the agrarian nations than they could from industrialized countries. From this point of view, local industry is a more efficient means of extracting resources from the agrarian nations. This greater efficiency can be attributed to the fact that with the establishment of local industry the nationalist governments, which replaced the old order, become agents of industrialization. The nationalist governments which are so common in the Third World come to power without an economic base. In order to create one, they use the quickest means of transforming agrarian surplus into capital: industrialization; thus their interests coincide with those of imperialism. When these governments triumph, as in Mexico, and acquire an economic base which makes them the most powerful national sector, the dependent nature of their economic base makes them an agent of the system from which the industrial economy acquires its rationale: modern imperialism.

Integrating the conjunctural and structural approaches we suggest that

the peasant movement is basically revolutionary in its thrust because it implies a complete change in the framework of social relationships, and does not just affect the relative position of the peasant sector within a national framework. Nevertheless, the strategic position which the peasant occupies in agrarian societies does not provide an adequate basis for analyzing the viability of his revolutionary action. The problem is complex and lends itself to speculation. Nevertheless, it may be useful to consider the following ideas as points for discussion.

In agrarian nations, the peasantry is the most numerous sector and occupies a strategic area in the national society. Moreover, it is the only sector capable of recovering an autonomous economic base. The peasantry can survive without industry but industry cannot easily survive without the peasantry. For example, in the revolution of 1910 Mexican industry was almost destroyed, while the peasants were able to pursue their economic activities, remaining self-sufficient and thus able to continue the armed struggle. In addition, the peasantry has the means to engage in guerilla warfare which has demonstrated its ability to successfully oppose the modern industrial army. Thus, the peasant sector is the only one able to undertake revolutionary action against industrialism in peripheral areas.

On the other hand, it seems clear that the revolutionary action of the peasant cannot directly affect the industrialized nations where world surpluses are concentrated and converted into a level of productive capacity and technological development which the peasants cannot even remotely equal. A global confrontation is not feasible between industry and the peasant. In this sense, the peasant's revolutionary activities have been and continue to be dependent upon factors associated with crises and problems within the industrial system itself. Conflicts among the major powers, the "world economic crisis," the precarious equilibrium between capitalism and socialism as industrial blocs, all these open up possibilities of revolutionary action by the peasantry. Wolf (1969) illustrates this very well. He also points out what seems to be the most severe limitation on the peasant revolution: its capacity to destroy but its apparent inability to create a new model of development for society.

This limitation has been partly explained by the very nature of peasant society (cf. Wolf 1966, 1969; Shanin 1971; Hobsbawn 1968; Landsberger 1968). The local character of peasant societies, the narrow framework of social relationships, within them, their atomization, all these constitute serious obstacles to horizontal integration; local conflicts, which are almost always territorial, accentuate this fragmentation, as does the familial character of their productive activity. Kinship relations in peasant society play a mediating role in social conflicts. Because relations with the outside are controlled by intermediaries, the peasant's vision of the larger is restricted. The systems of domination force the

peasant into a defensive intellectual position. The monopoly of technology, including the technology of communication, reduce the peasant's ability to manipulate external resources. The peasant's inability to establish lasting alliances with other sectors has also been considered a limitation, although I have some doubts about this. Finally, some characteristics which according to Wolf are derived from differentiated participation in production make coordinated horizontal action difficult.

These relationships within peasant society cannot be ignored or minimized, but in too many cases they are overemphasized, i.e. they are assigned a role which makes revolutionary action by the peasants impossible. Indeed, many of these characteristics are not peculiar to the peasant sector although they are more pronounced there. Some of them are and were present in the industrial proletariat which has been assigned a prominent revolutionary role. In the case of the industrial proletariat, these limitations on revolutionary action are considered to be surmountable through the development of ideological consciousness and the transformation of a class in itself into a class for itself.

These obstacles have also been overcome by the peasant in political action. Eric Wolf who studied the more important peasant wars of the twentieth century, confirms the viability of revolutionary action by peasants, including those confronting the great industrial powers. Despite coordinated and well-planned political action, however, peasants have not achieved the power to transform, more than partially, the whole of society to meet their demands. Frequently, peasant revolutions hand over their power to other sectors (as happened in Mexico in 1910) and these other sectors finally betray them. Also, quite frequently, peasant revolutions borrow ideologies from other sectors which they then bring to power. Modern peasant movements have frequently been ideologically alienated. This ideological alienation is associated with the lack of an ideology specifically expressing peasant interests, and with the absence of a project or model of a global society which might emanate from these interests.

This insistence on ideology may seem a little out of place today when many are speaking of the death of ideologies and of the anachronistic nature of political parties. The idea of technology and "science" as the guidelines for human action has gained ground in the social sciences and in the policies of industrial nations. Nevertheless, it is evident that the confrontation between those nations cannot be explained without taking ideology into account. It is difficult to conceive of the triumph of socialism without taking the Marxist ideological synthesis as a starting point. Ideology takes on greater importance in agrarian countries in which the socioeconomic characteristics of industrialism have not yet crystallized. In the industrialized countries production has become diversified but the productive system has been made uniform. In the agrarian countries

various modes of production coexist and industrialism, which has been considered the natural evolutionary model, is in profound crisis and seems exhausted. This opens up objective options for the future development of society and these must be debated in the realm of ideology.

The peasant lacks a politically structured ideology, but his revolutionary acts reveal a set of persistent core ideas, which can be summarized in the much-used slogan, "land and freedom," and which expresses a model of social organization: the free confederation of agrarian communities. Frequently this ideal is expressed in millenial movements which are effective in overcoming structural barriers to mobilization but are incapable of carrying through a revolutionary project.

The intellectual movement which came closer to transforming peasant utopianism into a political program was anarchism. However, because the anarchists were mainly in industrial areas in the context of imperialist conflicts, their purpose was frustrated and they did not succeed in establishing a modern theoretical framework for peasant action.

Recent instances of revolutionary behavior by peasants seem to fit Marxist theory. Marxism has been very diversified, yet it remains firmly rooted in the analytical framework of industrial society from which it arose and has created no other model. Moreover, Marxism in its most simplistic and dogmatic versions has been used as an instrument by nationalist oligarchies in agrarian countries to exploit the peasants. At the theoretical level, Marxist thought provides no alternative for the peasant. Nevertheless, at the tactical level Marxist revolutionaries, in agrarian countries, have succeeded in articulating peasant demands and mobilizing great masses around these demands, as happened in China and in Vietnam. Unfortunately, that tactical level has not contributed to the theoretical discussions of "official Marxism," a name we might give to those who see in Marxist thought a perfected system that should remain unaffected by changing times.

The sources for a peasant ideology which have been discussed — millenialism, anarchism, and Marxism at a tactical level — are very recent discoveries in the fields of political action and ideology, as recent as the formulation of theoretical frameworks for peasant societies in the social sciences. This intellectual activity is a response to the overwhelming phenomenon of peasant mobilization throughout the world. What is now required is a political and ideological program for the peasant in the modern world — possibly the only link which is lacking for the revolutionary action of the peasant to provide a new alternative for the organization of a future society.

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Social Evolution, Population, and Production

JAMES C. FARIS

1. INTRODUCTION

It is social production that marks the critical disjunction between human society and other animal societies. It is the ability of human society to produce subsistence, rather than control population in order to subsist, that discriminates human society from animal society. Such theoretical arguments can be tested with selected facts of population growth and population dynamics in human history. The theory is speculative, preliminary, and, at this point, concerned primarily with the cognitive implications, but it establishes the direction for further work.

Social production is that group subsistence activity which involves decisions about differential labor allocations. This means the awareness of alternatives, the ability to value labor, and, consequently, to plan and thus produce activity. Social production cannot be simply reduced to cooperation (though, of course, this is an important and necessary factor) for some animal societies cooperate in hunting (wolves and lions, for example. See Schaller 1972). The critical cognitive factor in social production is in the recognition or cognizance of labor potential, which could be described, in fact, as the *emergence of consciousness* — the objectification of work.[1]

This paper was initially tested on the participants of a seminar on sociocultural evolution at the University of Connecticut in 1973. It has benefited from and been substantially influenced by discussions with K. Chapdelaine, J. Driscoll, R. Gingerich, A. Marichild, J. O'Brien, B. Roseberry, N. Shapiro, M. Swift, F. Trudel, and D. White. Jennifer Faris, S. Leacock, B. Magubane, P. Newcomer, S. Polgar, K. Sacks, and J. Stauder have also kindly read and commented on an initial draft. Its evolution has been truly a social production.

[1] A common error is to assume objectification implies alienation. Though alienation requires objectification, objectification (consciousness) need not imply alienation. Objectification is necessary, in fact, for knowledge (see Luckacs 1972), and for these tasks in human history it is clearly progressive.

This social activity was previously unknown in evolutionary history, and it effectively emancipated society from population control by biosocial means. Population growth could be accommodated rather than controlled. Social production enabled the population growth of producers to play a progressive rather than a limiting role in the future change of society. With the cognizance of the value of labor comes the value of humans as social individuals, as potential producers. It is decisions about allocation to secure greater returns from labor investment that mark social production, for these enable the group to provide for more members — members whose *being* is now significant. To utilize labor in this manner is to produce.

The objectification of activity (and thus of people as producers) followed on and emerged from actual activity. It was born of struggle between the organization of activity based on biosocial requisites and dictates and the organization of activity which challenged or rejected this. The particular type or form of activity did not change significantly. It will be argued that the qualitative shift from merely hunting and gathering to producing was probably not marked by new types of subsistence activities, but rather by new forms of social relations. It should be clear that the *type* of activity (hunting and/or gathering) which humans first pursued differed little from the type of activity of many other animals. But organizationally the differences became immense. Tools, techniques, and skills (commonly regarded as *forces* of production) all became social. Cognizance of labor potential, in fact, was undoubtedly required to *release* forces of production and enable them to become significant in further social evolution. While the significant differences may not have been initially observable, the consequences led to divisions of labor in which the organization of activity of the participants acquired a significance heretofore unknown. Humans *qua* humans, as producers, potential producers, or as aged producers whose consciousness (knowledge) was still vital, became important.[2] Biosocial mechanisms (see Wynne-Edwards 1962) for the elimination of excess numbers (such as for making excess members available for natural selection) were no longer relevant — in fact, such mechanisms were literally counterproductive.

To focus on types, methods, or actual forces (tools, techniques, skills)

[2] This (see also 4.2) may not have initially meant completely egalitarian social relations. Women were probably infrequently hunters in societies in which hunting loomed large. In such societies women's production was primarily in reproduction and in processing, and as such, was dependent. Even though with the emergence of social production, reproduction became an important part of production, women may have been limited in these early societies by virtue of child-bearing. The enabling conditions which allowed the participation of women in other primary productive activity may have been absent in the work organization characteristic of much of early Pleistocene hunting. In this regard, then, hunting of this type does not constitute the most progressive type of productive activity, and the extent to which it prevailed (over other types such as gathering, see Linton 1970) may be regarded as a measure of the inhibition on further progressive social evolution.

of production as the means by which societies can be classified is to repeat the errors of Morgan (1963), errors all too unfortunately endorsed by Engels (1972).[3] To focus on the forces of production is to focus on the consequences of productive activity, not the cause. Engels, for example, regarded the disjunction between the appropriation of natural products and the production of domestic plants and animals as the distinction between food gathering and food production:

> The essential difference between human and animal society is that animals are at most *gatherers* whilst men are *producers*. This single but cardinal distinction alone makes it impossible simply to transfer the laws of animal societies to human societies (1875; emphasis original).

It is not the type of activity, however, but the organization of it that distinguishes animal "gatherers" from human "gatherers." Engels' focus on labor ("The Role Played by Labor in the Transition from Ape to Man" — see Engels 1940) is an amazingly sophisticated discussion for its time (see Trigger 1965) on the biological evolution resulting in *Homo sapiens*. But it led to an unfortunate emphasis on the form or type of activity rather than on the social organization of labor.

The theory of social production put forward in this paper thus focuses on *relations of production* (that is, the actual social relations humans enter into to produce) rather than on the *method* or *type* of production (e.g. hunting and gathering, agricultural, industrial). Thus, human hunting and gathering (or fishing) types of economies are clearly organized for social production and can be seen to produce in ways that may even approximate (in organization and returns) agricultural harvest (witness the great bison kills of the North American Plains people and the gluts of fishing "harvests" on the Northwest Coast — see Antler and Faris 1973). In this view, small-scale producer-controlled horticulture has much more in common with small-scale fishing than it does with large plantation agricultural systems (which should, in turn, be classified with large-scale mining organization, rather than under the rubric "agricultural societies" — see 2.3 below).

[3] And insufficiently recognized by Leacock (1963; 1972) and Terray (1972) in their discussions of Morgan. Concentration on productive forces rather than productive relations results in the mechanical materialism characteristic of White, Childe, Steward, and Harris (see Faris 1972b). Nevertheless, it should be made clear that the development of the present theory of social production and its use in accounting for much of the anthropological data on population control and social evolution is not a corrective to the work of Marx and Engels, but rather is intended to be an addition and development of their ideas in an area where we now have more information. The contemporaneity of their genius is continually astounding. As Haldane has suggested in his introduction to *Dialectics of Nature* (1940:xii, xiv), "When all criticisms have been made, it is astonishing how Engels anticipated the progress of science in the sixty years which have elapsed since he wrote ... had his remarks on Darwinism been generally known, I for one would have been saved a certain amount of muddled thinking."

2. METHODOLOGICAL COMMENT: THE TASKS AND LOGIC OF EVOLUTIONARY THEORY

Before turning to substantive data, it is necessary to consider several methodological implications of a theory of social production, for in arguing for an evolutionary approach to population dynamics, it is important to examine the requirements of adequate processual theory and the methods by which such theory may be tested. The methodology and logic of an adequate science is quite as important as its content and subject matter. The inadequacies of many sociocultural evolutionary theories rest in part in their inabilities to develop sound methods and rules for testing.

2.1. *Processual Concepts and Evolutionary Change*

Only processual and systemic change is relevant to evolutionary theory.[4] It is important at the outset, however, to distinguish between systemic change that is evolutionary and dynamic and systemic change that is not — that is, change that maintains only, that perpetuates homeostasis. An example of this latter type of change might be a furnace governed by a thermostat, or perhaps a self-regulating age organization (see Faris 1972d; Hallpike 1972). In the view adopted here, all evolutionary processes are of the former type — change is dynamic; it is perpetual, inherent, and generative of new forms. In evolutionary processes there are inherent contradictions giving rise to potentialities in each living system, the resolution of which enables the successor system — a different system characterized by new contradictions and potentialities. Qualitative change is a potential of each system. All living systems are in motion for reasons of internal potentialities, and the locus of change is to be sought in the systems themselves (Faris 1972c).

In evolutionary processes external factors and conditions, of course, play necessary roles, but they can never be sufficient forces. Thus, we must show how specific external conditions not just affect change, but how the internal potentialities of the system under consideration (its contradictions) enabled the effect of these particular external conditions.[5] It must be shown how any climactic, environmental, population, or technological situation, for example, articulates which of the potentials and limi-

[4] That is, capricious or random events are not considered, unless it can be shown how these "accidents" become necessary in social process. Since these can never be "accounted for" in processual theory, social scientists can at best know enough of social dynamics to know what alternatives will not take place should an external random event be introduced.

[5] ". . . external causes are the conditions of change and internal causes are the basis of change . . . external causes become operative through internal causes" (Mao Tse-tung 1970:5).

tations of any social system (see Newcomer 1972a), for they cannot be independent agents determining the course of events (*contra* White 1959; Steward 1955; Whiting 1964). Modern commentators who consider the motive forces in social evolution to be external to the system — to be independent variables — bear a remarkable similarity to Lamarck; consequence is read as cause (see Faris 1972c; Newcomer 1972b).

2.2. *Adaptation and Function*

We must also reexamine the related view that social evolution is the outcome of functional adaptation. Evolution is known from the products of its operation, that is, from the new species, the disjunctions, and qualitative changes which result from its having taken place. The origin of species, then, is the truly significant problem in evolution — how do new forms come into being? This fundamental question is not answered by reference to general statements about the necessary operations for the maintenance of life — such as survival or adaptation. Of course survival and adaptation are necessary for evolution to take place (if evolution did not take place, then the species or society would not persist), but this does not constitute a theory of evolution.

Survival is a statement of persistence only, and adaptation is a description of maintenance processes only. Neither can address the dynamic features of an evolutionary theory, the establishment of new species, each with its own unique laws of development and unique laws of adaptation. Adaptation, like function, is simply an empirical specification of maintenance — *not* change. To view adaptation as the motive force (see Alland 1967) is to treat consequence as cause. To posit adaptation as the motive force is naive, for it says nothing more than that the process, whatever it is, is working.[6] It cannot suggest how social evolution comes about, except to appeal to external conditions and adaptation to them; for a system that only adapts cannot change in and of itself, it only adjusts when pressured by external agents. In such circumstances, how does one system become another? How is change enabled? What is it that governs the external change agents? For unless the causality can be specified, the change can hardly be regarded as processual, and the functional measure of its occurrence is certainly not the job of a theoretical science.

What must be sought is a theory of process that will generate the facts of history from elements present in the beginning, not simply look back

[6] Dynamic and progressive evolutionary systems can never be maximally adapted in any case, for such overspecialization is dangerous. It leads to stagnation and extinction usually, never to change and advance.

over history to demonstrate that survival and adaptation have occurred in response to a host of external influences.[7]

2.3. *Disjunction and Qualitative Change*

A view of evolutionary history which treats every form as a quantitative expression of every other must rely on external determinism, on some type of independent force (environment, population, economy). If all social forms are similar and differ from one another only in degree, some having more or less of something than do others, then anticipation of qualitatively new forms is impossible. This was the mistake of Lamarck, for by accepting an environmental determinism, he was unable to clearly see the significant problem in evolution — the emergence of qualitatively distinct forms, the origin of species.[8]

The emergence of new forms from old, such as the emergence of new species or a new stage in human history, means that new laws of development and new dynamics characterize the form or state. There has been a disjunction with the past — a qualitative change. No new energy or matter comes into being, to be sure, and the seeds of all new forms must be sought in the old. But the transformation of quantitative changes into qualitative changes is what distinguishes evolution from the simple quantitative change whose consequence we call adaptation. The disjunctive form is new in that new contradictions (potentialities) characterize it. External factors affect this new form in different ways than they affect other forms.

[7] These processes are normally not observable, ("All science would be superfluous if the outward appearance and the essence of things directly coincided" [Marx 1967, III: 817]), but we deduce them from their effects and their mechanisms. We must look behind reality for explanation, behind behavior for process. Inductive empiricism not only blinds us to such processes, but it effectively denies these processes.

A process statement simply illustrates the dynamics; it specifies the relationships between the facts observed and the means by which these facts and these relationships (and not others) came about. To explain phenomena, then, scientists must be able to generate these phenomena — to specify the processes by which these phenomena came to be the way they are (and not any other way).

A scientific explanation is a theory, a statement of the process generating the facts we are attempting to account for. Biological evolution furnishes a good example. No one has ever seen evolution taking place; we see the consequences and perhaps some of the mechanisms, such as natural selection. But the process is an abstract statement which explains how the observable quantitative changes (such as differential reproductive success) result in the qualitative distinctions, the emergence of new forms we call species. In biological evolution a statement of the process can not be just a statement of the incremental and quantitative changes, for this can only describe, but never generate, the data accounted for by evolutionary theory: the origin of species. An excellent treatment of the concepts and methods involved in an adequate theory of social process may be found in Newcomer 1972b. See also Faris 1972c.

[8] Though he contributed little to its solution, the great genius of Darwin was to clearly specify the problem.

Much of post-nineteenth century scientific theory of process — certainly in social science — has been characterized by an emphasis on continuities and similarities (see 3.1 below) rather than on disjunction and change.[9] Of course, Darwin and the early evolutionists had to argue against entrenched religious dogmas about the dissimilarities between animals and humans. But this remained the dominant view in processual analyses long after evolution was an established and accepted fact (see Liebowitz 1969), and its theoretical effect was to cripple research into the implications of the disjunction between animal societies and human society. They were treated as quantitative expressions of each other.

2.4. *Classification*

It is of critical importance that a science that produces a testable explanation specify change in systematic natural processes in a way which reflects the qualitative or disjunctive shifts in the development of the system. That is, it is essential that our classifications and taxonomies reflect the essence of development — the qualitative changes that occur in social evolution. In biological evolution the classification into species, each with somewhat different determinants of development and change, is such an example. But biological classification makes sense because we have a theory of its generation, a theory of evolution. Otherwise it could legitimately be argued that a functional environmental classification which would group whales, fish, and submarines, or birds, bats and airplanes, is as valid as a classification that emphasizes their differences.

Apart from the speculations of nineteenth-century materialists, an adequate processual theory in social science has heretofore been lacking. Thus, classifications of human history into stages or epochs hardly reveal any systematic process that generated the particular stages. We have empirical classifications where detailed specifications of reality have substituted for theory — for an explanation of that reality (see Service 1962). We have classifications such as "agricultural society" which group plantation production with small-scale independent horticulture, and not with mining or factory production. We have classifications such as "indus-

[9] As a result of the prejudices of the nineteenth century, a scientific stress on similarities between human societies became necessary to counter the racist interpretations of alien societies. At the leadership of Boas and his followers, this led to a stifling relativism on the one hand (see White 1947 for an interesting discussion of the incipient evolutionism of these early relativists), or a projection of some form of contemporary social institutions characteristic of developed capitalism on the other (cf. Faris 1972a). Thus, for an example of the latter, we find economic man everywhere maximizing advantage and assigning value in terms of local supply and demand (see Firth 1939) or differential valuation based on culturally specific criteria (Bohannon and Dalton 1962).

trial society" which lump together capitalist and socialist nations, a classification which can in no way reflect the totally different systems of production, distribution, and consumption.

As mentioned previously, one of the more unfortunate mistakes of Engels was in having an adequate theory of social evolution, yet accepting the data of L. H. Morgan as an accurate classification of the stages of human history (Engels 1972). It is not that Engels was wrong about the processual theory, only that he was wrong in accepting an inadequate classification based largely on the forces of production (rather than including social relations of production) to argue for its manifestation.

2.5. *Ontological Implications*

A final methodological point concerns the implications of studying the present to gain clues to the past. Apart from the logic of deductive reasoning, it will be argued below that in understanding the population dynamics and the social organization of the capitalist mode of production, we are in a position to understand more clearly what preceded this epoch. Indeed, it is difficult to see why in fact studying the present to understand the past has not become a fundamental methodological position — as Marx has suggested, "The anatomy of man is a key to the anatomy of the ape" (1970:145).[10] Explanation involves showing how the potentialities of one system generate its successor, and since "nothing can result at the end of a process that did not occur at its beginning as a prerequisite and condition" (Marx 1971:78), all the elements of the process must be present from its inception. The present work seeks to trace social production in human history by examining the role of labor and productive relations through their various transformations in the different epochs of human history. An analysis of contemporary capitalism, accordingly, reveals that labor constitutes the source of value in such a system. And it will be argued here that in labor value are found the seeds for the many transformations through history which resulted in the mode of production known as capitalism. Thus, it is not necessary to attempt to find capitalism in Paleolithic society (*contra* Tiger and Fox 1971; see Faris 1972a:21 for an exposure of this tendency in classical social anthropology), but only to find evidence of the recognition of the potential of labor.

[10] It has been repeatedly pointed out (Burrow 1966; Engels 1940:19, for example) that much of Darwin's inspiration for his thinking on the evolution of species stemmed from observing the competition for survival which characterized the political economy of England in the nineteenth century. Certainly his debt to Spencer for the concept of "the survival of the fittest" is widely known (Hardin 1969:159).

3. ANIMAL SOCIETIES AND HUMAN SOCIETY

As argued above, any consideration of the relationships between the social organization and population dynamics of *Homo sapiens* and that of other animal species must be based upon a clear understanding of social evolution. That is, social similarities and differences established between humans and other animals must be seen as the results of processes which are specifiable, selective pressures which can be documented. It is no longer sufficient simply to describe the social differences in terms of traditional cultural discriminators such as tool making, fire control, or even language. We must discuss how these specific features came into being and how they were significant in altering both society and its numbers, if in fact they did. We must understand the processes and selective pressures which have generated similarities and maintained a continuity of process between human societies and those of other animals, and we must understand those qualitative differences between human societies and those of other animals, for at these latter points processes will be disjunctive and different laws of development and differential dynamics will be at work. It is these points of processual disjunction that we can meaningfully speak of as the distinctions between other animal societies and human society.

3.1. *The Continuity Emphasis and the Disjunctive Traditions*

Today, in discussing humans and animals, the dominant and most sanctioned and rewarded view emphasizes the continuity of determinants and the basic similarities of social organization and population dynamics. In fact, knowledge of the population dynamics of animal societies has been taken to be the proof of similar regulations operative in human society (Wynne-Edwards 1962:21; Sussman 1972:259). Recent ethological research and field studies of animal social organization are regarded as informative about human society, and the continuities more instructive than the differences (see Kummer 1971; Kortmulder 1968).[11]

[11] This view is carried to its most vulgar extreme in the apologists for various forms of oppression. Aggression and the basis of private property (Ardrey 1961; 1966), imperialism (Tiger and Fox 1971), and sexism (Tiger 1970) are seen as biological manifestations common to humans. While general human problems are accounted for by innate animal behavior in this vulgar view, in the same genre of biological explanation, *specific* human problems (such as the socioeconomic state of black people) require an emphasis on the dissimilarities between *human* populations (see Coon 1963). The argument is that black people are in such a condition because they are innately stupider than whites (see Jensen 1969; Eysenck 1971). This general thesis has recently been extended to *all* poor — black and other — by Herrnstein (1971), who argues that ruling classes are those innately superior. These views have been dismissed scientifically many times, but persist as ideological tools for justifying racism, sexism, class oppression, and even imperialist wars.

However, as noted, many anthropologists have accepted some type of disjunction between human society and animal societies based on one or more traditional cultural discriminators, such as tool making, fire use, or language. It is argued that tool making required the type of mental, physical, and social organization characteristic of humans (Washburn 1961) and thus effectively marks a disjunction; that controlled fire required similar characteristics (Oakley 1961); and that human speech requires species specific innate mechanisms (Chomsky 1968) and supralaryngeal abilities (Lieberman and Crelin 1971). In essence, the symboling behavior (see White 1959) and its physiological requisites are seen to mark the critical disjunction of humans from animals. Apart from the fact that many animal societies exhibit learned symboling behavior (Gardiner and Gardiner 1969), it will be argued below (3.3) that the particular traditional discriminators put forward are at best consequences and concomitants of social production, not causal factors resulting in social production.

3.2. *Use and Misuse of V. Wynne-Edwards*

We have known for some time that population regulation by social means is an organizational characteristic of a great many animal societies (Wynne-Edwards 1962). Animal societies have no way of producing to accommodate population increase, so their social organizations must regulate population. Population regulation is necessary because any successful species in evolutionary history requires a potential excess of births over deaths. An unchecked population could conceivably increase to the point where the species would be threatened by lack of sufficient feeding resources. This necessitated excess (or potential excess) is managed by means of social conventions which organize the competition for resources (Wynne-Edwards 1965). Spacing and territorial management are, for example, common mechanisms for the control of animal populations (Sussman 1972; Wynne-Edwards 1962), and many other mechanisms for reproductive regulation are also known. Animal social organizations commonly make available excess numbers for natural selection. The various signaling devices necessary for animal dispersion are in aid of resource management, and resource management in animal societies is, in fact, population control.[12]

[12] This requires rejection of Darwin's suggestion (1871: Part III) that many of the various signaling devices (epideictic displays) were mechanisms for sexual selection (Wynne-Edwards 1962:17). From the perspective of this study, however, there has been an unfortunate use of Wynne-Edwards in discussions of competition in human society (see Rappaport 1968). It seems clear that Wynne-Edwards himself misunderstood the implications of his theory for human society. For example, Wynne-Edwards considers that private property is the logical extension of animal territoriality (1962:188–191). He states that the "absence of

Human society may be distinguished from these other animal societies precisely because human society has the option of *not* controlling population, but regulating labor (and thereby accommodating population). Human societies no longer had to regulate population because they could not produce, but could now accommodate population.

3.3. *Tools and Speech in Human Evolution*

It is with social production that the various cultural traits traditionally used to demarcate humans from animals can be understood. Tool use, then, can be seen not only to make possible increased production, but also to be enabled by productive requirements. Innovations, invention, or the diffusion of technological ideas must be seen as necessitated in evolutionary history — as tools or knowledge that enable change to take place, to be sure, but to come into use when the social relations of production demanded them and could utilize them effectively. Thus, some Bushmen have knowledge of agriculture and some agricultural techniques, but simply do not have to engage in agricultural production so long as hunting and gathering will provide for them (Lee and DeVore 1968). Northwest Coast societies such as the Kwakiutl (Ruyle 1973) were state structured, yet were based on essentially hunting and gathering types of production. Certainly, lack of knowledge of agriculture and inadequate technology did not inhibit the adoption of other types of production; the situation simply did not require that these changes be initiated. Other examples are plentiful of the existence of potentially advantageous tools and techniques prior to their emergence as necessary to production. These could be said to approximate mutations in biology which are not selected against, but which will not appear to alter the course of biological evolution until sometime later in the history of the species. Population growth may have been an important factor in bringing about these innovations in specific circumstances as social relations of production changed in quantitative ways to accommodate the growth.

Any discussion of the role of tools must look at just what it was that tools did socially, how labor potential was realized in them as embodied

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protection of individual interests [private property] has . . . devastating consequences" (1962:189). Wynne-Edwards fails to see that it is *allowing* individual exploitation that is devastating. It is the group welfare that is important, not individual interest. The genius of his analysis of animal societies simply failed him in looking at humans. In discussing humans, he mistakes possession and management for ownership, and confuses society with its ruling segments, such as the state. He is guilty of the crudest social Darwinism in regarding selection as operating on behalf of those with respect for property interests and law. He also makes the mistake of considering the relatively greater preponderance of patrilineal inheritance forms in human society as a function of male sexual dimorphism (1962:191), and young adult migration as having a primate ecological origin (1962:188).

labor. Animals can use tools, even make them, but this is only as individuals and animal tools do not embody labor for the group. In human society, however, tools could mean increased manpower for production, changed land tenure or mobility patterns, and different forms of work organization. The social relevance of tools can be most clearly seen in hunting and gathering societies. Gathering containers, for example, help emancipate societies from fixed territorial commitments and thus enable and permit organizational changes in work. The same is true of tools known as weapons. The hunting advantages of the bow and arrow are clear, but it is also of interest to see how truly social these tools really are.[13] It is here that the primary role of social production becomes clear, for social aspects of tool use are as important in the explanation of their appearance in social evolution as are their technological aspects. While it is obvious that tools facilitated greater control of energy (White 1949), we must ask what the greater control of energy aided. It may have been, for example, required by greater population (see Boserup 1965), which in turn was enabled by the realization of labor potential in social production.

Technological changes may in themselves enable and help bring about qualitative shifts in social production. These shifts not only accommodate population growth, but also establish new laws of population growth and new dynamics of development. The potentialities of each epoch change, and new contradictions come into being. The work of Boserup (1965) is one example of work based on the premise that technological changes are consequences and not causes (see also Carneiro 1967; Harner 1970). Boserup's thesis (limited to agricultural societies and agricultural growth) is that population pressures precipitate changes in technology, social organization, and culture. For Boserup, tools and technology are a function of population pressure, not vice-versa. Boserup sees population as an independent variable rather than as the outcome of social relations of production. Her commitment to this type of determinism is unfortunate,[14] but, as discussed above, any appeal to external agents (independent variables) in the analysis of social change cannot but result in a mechanistic view (see Faris 1972c). There is no doubt that population growth has aided in precipitating many changes in the history of human society, but population dynamics change in each epoch and cannot be understood outside the particular set of social relations of production to

[13] Witness, for example, the exchange of arrow tips that takes place between !Kung Bushmen hunters (Marshall 1965:253). An elaborate series of rules surrounds the distribution of the kill, based on who shot the animal and whose arrow killed it (men commonly use arrows other than their own). The entire exchange of arrows and the rules of meat distribution ensure that everyone gets a share, that arrows are always available, and that production is social.

[14] And is the focus of much discussion in a recent book devoted to a critical examination of Boserup's ideas — see Spooner 1972.

which they are subject. To understand population growth (and to see its role in precipitating change) we need to know initially the inherent potentialities of the social system that facilitated, enabled, or required the growth. As noted above, population, *along with* technology, environment — or even climate, is a significant and even necessary factor in social evolution. But it must be shown that these factors can not be sufficient in and of themselves if the social relations of production in societies in question do not enable or require such factors.

Another traditional disjunctive discriminator based on symboling behavior is human speech. The idealist Cartesian thesis, represented by Chomsky (1968), is that human speech capacities are species-specific, innate abilities. This descriptive statement is trivial if true, and completely fails to explain why and how this came about — the requirement any processual (evolutionary) account must demand.[15]

This general tradition has been given support by the dissimilar speech capacities claimed to exist between *Homo sapiens* and classic Neanderthal (*la chapelle aux-saints*) (Lieberman and Crelin 1971). Lieberman and Crelin show that Neanderthal speech could have been but a fraction as efficient as *Homo sapiens* speech in information transmission and, in fact, was qualitatively different. They conclude that "man is human because he can say so" (1971:221). This conclusion is, however, unrevealing. First, though it may be the case that information is transmitted in Neanderthal speech many times more slowly than in the speech of *Homo sapiens*, this does not mean that other modalities were not available to Neanderthals for symboling and information transmission. Certainly the cultural data for Neanderthals indicate considerable sophistication, and the clear possibility of social production (see Brose and Wolpoff 1971). In fact, early Neanderthal has been considered ancestral to *Homo sapiens* by some anthropologists (Brace 1967).

But the most important criticism is that here, too, no statement of evolutionary process is forthcoming. Speech capacities had to develop for social reasons, it seems patently clear, and it will be in specifying these social relations of production that a solution to the selective pressures on vocal tract morphology will be found. The question that must be asked is what conditions would have enabled, facilitated, and required the emergence of a communication system such as is manifest in *Homo sapiens* speech. And what conditions would have selected against adaptations and mutations other than those that led to the emergence of the

[15] This criticism, as with others here, does not mean that the views under discussion do not have validity in other types of nonevolutionary explanation. Obviously, Chomsky's ideas of innate mechanisms are framed to answer to the creativity of human language and provide a basis for the analysis of meaningful utterances, not to account for why or how these may have come about. Nevertheless, these ideas have been used as indicators of the disjunction between humans and other animals.

system required for *Homo sapiens* speech? When these can be answered, we will then be in a position to understand the reasons for the claimed differences between Neanderthal and *Homo sapiens* speech abilities. The emancipating and liberating change brought about by the transition to social relations of production which came into being during the Pleistocene facilitated the dramatic shifts of the Paleolithic — in tools, physical morphology, and, if Lieberman and Crelin are correct, in speech abilities. This puts *Homo sapiens* speech, an obvious consequence and concomitant of social production, in its appropriate processual relationship. The demands of social production required more rapid speech and complex information processing (such as is shown to exist in current motor theories of speech production — see Lieberman et al. 1967), and this was met in *Homo sapiens* speech abilities. We cannot assume we have speech by virtue of fortuitous mutation, or as the result of a collection of evolutionary accidents unrelated to the selective pressures brought about by social life. Any concatenation of cause and effect which may be argued to produce the contemporary vocal tract morphology of *Homo sapiens* must rest in a processual explanation premised on the necessities of social evolution. Of course, bipedal posture enabled and required a reduction in prognathism, which helped result in the shape of the supralaryngeal vocal tract in *Homo sapiens* — this point is necessary to any complete explanation of *Homo sapiens* speech. But this cause is not sufficient, for speech modeling requires a complex integrated system of many morphological and neurological components, and to posit biological evolutionary pressures alone is naive. Rather than "man is human because he can say so" (Lieberman and Crelin), ". . . men in the making arrived at the point where *they had something to say* to one another" (Engels 1940:283).

4. POPULATION DYNAMICS AND PRODUCTION IN HUMAN HISTORY

The thesis has been advanced that the disjunction between human society and other animal societies rests in the ability or capacity of human society to produce socially. It has been argued that social production emancipated human society from population control and enabled it to accommodate population growth.

4.1. *Population Regulation*

Regulating population because they cannot produce is a paramount demand on animal societies. Human societies can produce and thereby accommodate population growth. Population growth is a progressive

result of the recognition of labor potential. This thesis requires reexamination of the data on mortality and birth-spacing mechanisms, such as infanticide, postpartum sexual restrictions, and various birth control techniques.

We are not so much interested in what factors inhibited population growth but rather in those factors which did not, for they are of most significance from the point of view of evolution. This requires looking at some of the "inhibiting" factors, however, for it will be the argument here that some of the factors traditionally considered to inhibit population growth are in fact properly understood as social means for ultimately promoting progressive population increase.

First, it is necessary to dispel what may be a myth — the high incidence of infanticide during the Paleolithic. This widely held view (see Polgar 1972:206; Sussman 1972:259) is represented by Birdsell (in Lee and DeVore 1968:243) who states that 15 to 50 percent of the children born were of necessity killed. The basis for this estimate is inadequate and speculative. It may be true, however, that natural mortality is sufficient to account for the slow increase in population during this period. Durand argues that "In many cases and perhaps in most cases, improved conditions of mortality may have been the main cause of demographic expansion" (1972:374; see also Petersen 1969:351). Instead of limiting population growth, hunting and gathering societies actually encouraged growth. As Polgar observes (1972:206):

> It is hard to imagine, however, that among pre-agricultural people the perception of population pressure would often be consciously translated into the intensification of anti-reproductive practices.

"Encouraging growth" does not simply mean having as many offspring as physiologically possible, for the population dynamics must be understood in terms of the constraints and potentialities of the system of social production. Obviously, in Paleolithic society the health and strength of individuals in the society were of paramount importance so that production could continue. Two or three children in as many years not only decreased a woman's productive contribution, but in those circumstances it also meant the children themselves and their mother were disadvantaged and potentially weak. Thus, a birth spacing mechanism such as a postpartum sexual restriction made good productive sense, as the possibility of a growing, healthy, and efficient *productive* population is greater if some attention is focused on the viability (labor potential) of the participants. Infanticide, where it did occur, may have been occasional. But it was not to inhibit growth; rather it was to insure the success of those living. It is not necessarily just numbers that provide the best potential for a growing population, a critical factor is the relative health of the individu-

als of the society; productive relations in a progressive evolutionary system demand this. Thus, the survival of healthy and strong members was of prime significance. If mortality were the most important factor in the slow rate of population growth during this period, attempts to reduce mortality by selecting for health and strength are even more reasonable; certainly having as many children as possible would do nothing to check mortality or insure a healthy and strong productive force. By careful reproductive planning (which may have occasionally involved infanticides, as well as postpartum sexual restriction, etc.), the productive strength of the society could be best insured — and thereby the growth potential of the group in terms of numbers as well. Weak people, particularly sickly children without productive knowledge (i.e. the healthy aged were more valuable to the group since they possessed this knowledge), could simply not be an asset in such conditions, and in fact constituted a brake on change. They may well have been left or killed (Boserup 1970). This also makes clearer the fear of simultaneous multiple births which occurs widely in the world; simultaneous or very closely spaced multiple children in tenuous circumstances are not an advantage but a possible detriment.

In the view adopted here, contraception, abortion, and postpartum sexual restrictions[16] are all birth-spacing mechanisms serving the same ends as infanticide. In fact, it may be that there is a synchronic or evolutionary order in which one of these practices will appear vis-à-vis any of the others. This must be approached in a more systematic and processually informed way than the usual cross-cultural correlational methods (cf. Saucier 1972; Whiting 1964).

It is in this light that infanticide may be understood best. Although speculation about a high rate of infanticide during the Paleolithic is not warranted by the evidence, it may have occurred. If so, its purpose was to insure a maximally strong, healthy, and productive society — its "cause" could hardly be the various consequences documented. This does *not* say that the effect or consequence of the various birth-spacing mechanisms may not have been consciously or unconsciously to insure adequate resource division (Lee and DeVore 1968), to maintain sexual balance (Balikci 1967), to increase ecosystem stability (Freeman 1971), or to maintain prestige systems (Douglas 1966). It is only that these proposed consequences cannot account for the evolution of the practice. Freeman, for example, correctly points out (1971:1013) as erroneous the notion that "generalized infanticide is carried out irrespective of prevailing circumstances as a strategy of resource management." Further, he states that "Infanticide is a social practice, and causally to invoke blatant

[16] Saucier (1972:238) is wrong in suggesting that postpartum sexual restriction is not a method of birth spacing (see Polgar 1972:261; Nurge 1972:252).

environmental determinism should *a priori* raise doubts" (1971:1013). It is thus particularly unfortunate to observe Freeman retreat to the functionalism and tautology of an explanation in "ecosystem stability" (1971:1017).

To regard infanticide and other birth-spacing mechanisms as a direct response to some externally derived constraint is mechanical and distinctly Lamarckian. In such a view, sociocultural evolution would be impossible — all human society would still be simply well-adapted Paleolithic groups.

To fully understand birth-spacing mechanisms, however, we need much better data on just when and in what circumstances they occur. Do abortions and infanticides occur more often while another child is still being nursed? Is there abandonment of the practices in times of plenty?[17] What percentage of infanticides involve malformed infants? These are all, of course, empirical questions, but they may shed significant light on the theories suggested herein (see Sussman 1972:259).

We must seek dynamic relationships in changing societies, not functional relationships in homeostatic systems.[18] With a theory of social production in which the internal potentialities of the system of social relations are transformed to new systems of social relations for production, birth-spacing mechanisms may be seen dynamically, not as inhibitors.

Restated, the argument is that in evolutionary history before the emergence of class structures (i.e. in those societies in which producers still have control over decisions about their production) human societies require strong and healthy members for social production. In general, they attempt to have as many strong and healthy offspring as possible. The various methods of altering maximum reproduction are not thus properly to be understood as population control. They are *not* "keeping family size low" (Polgar 1972:206), but spacing births, or killing sickly children, or eliminating one or more of multiple births in ways necessary

[17] Freeman (1971:1015) quotes an example from the Netsilik in which a father allowed a newborn daughter to live, rather than be killed as had been the fate of some of her sisters. This decision occurred at a fall fishing site, at which the catch was very good. Freeman suggests this decision reflects the father's "mood," when it seems clear the productive successes were an important factor. The difference in interpretation is more than difference in emphasis.

[18] This is not to imply purposive behavior, conscious striving, and teleology in social evolution. This would imply consciousness not of potential in given circumstances, but of ultimate ends. The arguments of this paper are that the projection of labor potential (the consciousness said to mark the disjunction between humans and other animals) is specific to the circumstances. This, of course, acted primarily to reproduce the initial conditions of the productive process at its end. The dynamic aspect comes in that such production always alters the system somewhat, and potentiality is always changing. Social production is, by definition, change — it is simply that the long term effects may well appear fortuitous in relation to the specific decisions themselves. The arguments herein are decidedly not deterministic.

to the health and welfare of *as many* offspring as possible in the tenuous material circumstances. Reproductive planning for social production is not the same as controlling population for resource management; it is, in fact, quite the opposite. Reproductive planning mechanisms are quality control, having little to do with numbers at all, for by resulting in maximally productive members, the population in fact increased slowly, helping to bring about the later developments discussed elsewhere which we document as social evolution. The recognition of the potential of labor necessitated this reproductive planning.

It should be obvious at this point that any suggestions that warfare in classless societies served to control population (Harris 1972), whether directly or in some indirect manner that had any evolutionary significance, are unacceptable. Part of the demands of production in human history may have required warfare, but warfare did not and could not have evolved in order to control population. Organized competition may function in some peripheral areas to keep population down (see Rappaport 1968), but this is not *why* it exists. As White suggested some time ago (White 1945), it takes evolutionary thinking to really see how inadequate functional thinking is in accounting for social phenomena.

4.2. *The Implications of Producer Control*

The causal importance of the labor potential of healthy producers in the population dynamics of classless societies has been indicated. Cognizance of labor value led to recognition of the value of human beings *qua* humans to the society. This meant that there was some endeavor to maintain each person in as physically capable a state as possible to insure maximum returns[19] for labor, such returns were required to support the children and nonproductive aged. It has been argued that, overall, this resulted in reproductive success as well.

But these population dynamics obtain when producers control decisions about the production. When nonproducers control production (nonproducers who are otherwise physically capable of producing) such as in class-based societies, then too do their production dictates govern the population growth patterns. The slow natural growth that occurred in the Paleolithic was a function of population increase brought about by

[19] By insuring maximum returns — this is to be understood *socially*, not simply in input/output terms (see Note 30). Production for use cannot be equated with production for exchange. Sahlins (1972) unfortunately focuses on exchange in production, allowing him to quantify the "underproduction" of precapitalist societies. For the implications involved in the distinction between use value and exchange value, and production for use and for exchange, see Marx 1971.

increasing control of mortality, more efficent resource exploitation, and better work organization.[20] This population increase in turn helped enable (or even necessitate) certain technological innovations, organizational changes, etc., which resulted in qualitatively distinct social forms.

Each progression in this evolutionary development required the same or greater labor inputs (see Sahlins 1972), but in each new epoch it also became possible to produce relatively more with the labor expended. The fact that this occurred is evidence that systematic "population control" could not have been a dominant factor in evolutionary history. Eventually, in such circumstances, it became possible to support nonproductive members of the society who were neither aged nor children, i.e. who were capable of producing but did not.[21] In order to command maintenance, they had to have some control over the production of others, and the emergences of class structures began — a class of producers, and a class of those commanding part of that production without having produced it. However achieved, this was maintained by force and justified by myth and ideology as in legal institutions and concepts, and private property. As producers no longer totally controlled decisions about their labor potential, they also became subject to modes of production whose dynamics introduced new and different population requirements over which they had no effective control. Population is not an abstract entity; it is composed of real people, and the argument of this paper is that it is the class composition of the population which we must understand to understand population dynamics. It is argued that it was the population of producers which has the progressive and dynamic role in history. The following examples illustrate this.[22]

[20] This is not to be interpreted as some type of maximal adaptation to an ecosystem, nor can it be usefully specified in terms of minimax strategic decisions. The decisions and directions of social evolution are necessitated by material conditions and enabled by the potentialities present at any time. This may not appear as maximally adaptive in any systems analysis. For discussion of the error in regarding evolution as adaptation, see 2.2 above and Faris (1972c).

[21] In an article already overly speculative, an attempt to specify and spell out the origins of inequality will not be attempted (see Note 2). Some features such a theory cannot have are worth outlining, however. It seems clear that theories such as those of Fried (1967) that redistribution results in stratification or those of Sahlins (1958) that surpluses result in stratification are not adequate as formulated (see Newcomer 1972b for a more complete discussion). Nevertheless, Sahlins and Fried are among the few anthropologists of this generation who have focused attention on these problems, and we are in their debt for having done so.

[22] Interpretations based on contemporary hunting and gathering societies must be attempted with caution. It has been shown that most extant hunting and gathering societies do not exist in any Paleolithic purity, but have been considerably influenced by capitalist expansion in one way or another (see Leacock 1972:24). Similarly, various social practices, such as the reputed female infanticide amongst the Eskimo (Freeman 1971) may well have no evolutionary significance whatsoever, but reflect an institutional arrangement of societies whose existence is no mirror for the progressive Paleolithic societies discussed here.

4.3. *Feudalism: Europe and Africa*

The mode of production known as feudalism has been known from many parts of the world, manifest in various forms at various times.[23] The feudal mode of production is characterized by a class of producers, commonly producing on land or some other resource controlled by a small class of aristocrats whose legitimacy is usually sanctioned by mystified birthright, and whose authority is maintained by force of arms. The producers produce for themselves and for the aristocrats in control of the means of production. During the vital and progressive feudal period, production commanded by ruling classes was largely in kind, but later actual rents were demanded as production for use gradually shifted to production for exchange. This shift marks the decline of feudal modes of production, and the rise of the essential requirements for capitalist production.

The social relations of production under feudalism required and enabled a slow increase in population. That is, producing families had to reproduce themselves plus insure subsistence security with numbers of children to help in production and to maintain them in later years. This was accommodated (as well as enabled) by quantitative changes in work organization and in agricultural technology, and by migration of producers into towns. But disease (particularly in Europe) often acted to decimate the urban populations, and mortality was sufficiently high so that town sizes grew very slowly if at all during most of the period.[24] Technological improvements (three-field system, moldboard plow) and increasing exploitation brought about an increase in production rurally which generated a surplus in the hands of the feudal ruling class — to be consumed or hoarded, as there were no productive investment opportunities. In Europe the contradictions in this system were such that it could not continue with the small quantitative adaptations that had heretofore characterized the mode of production. Agricultural technology became as advanced as it could be without research into new areas, research unprovided for and impossible under feudal social relations. And there was little or no possibility for expanding into new European territory with the same mode of production. The population in excess of that required for agricultural maintenance was cast off the land, and having but their labor to sell could only produce for exchange. The

[23] The following brief survey focuses principally on the populations and economic consequences of feudalism rather than on the struggle between the antagonistic classes which actually generate the epoch and its successor. I do not think this distorts or inaccurately represents feudalism and the transition from feudalism to capitalism. For detailed discussion, see Marx (1965); Sweezy et al. (1950–1953); Davidson (1961; 1969); and Rodney (1971).

[24] Epidemics were most devastating where the greatest concentration of populations occurred. Therefore, despite migration to cities throughout feudal times, the urban populations probably did not grow significantly.

accumulations of people and wealth in the emerging cities marked the beginning of a transformation; a qualitative change was occurring as the accumulated wealth and the available labor were harnessed for capitalist production. This necessitated markets, resources (material, capital, and labor), and led to explorations; the mines and plantations of the New World and the labor and markets of Africa yielded the further accumulation of capital for Europe's industrialization. Europe's expansion abroad began as a prop for a decaying feudalism, but was essential for the rise of capitalism.

European feudalism could simply not remain a viable and healthy mode of production. It could not maintain the same social relations, and a change was necessitated as the contradictions became too great. There was insufficient land, too many people, and too much unproductive wealth for the system to survive as it was. Feudalism might have persisted in Europe had the increasing population been able to expand into new lands and maintain the same feudal social relations of production instead of precipitating change. However, without areas into which to move or other innovations to maintain the same social relations of production, Europe's feudalism collapsed and the transformation to capitalism was necessitated.[25]

African feudalism, on the other hand, could probably have remained a viable mode of production for many years had it not been for the influence of a new capitalist Europe (ironically, an interference necessitated by the fact that Europe's feudalism was collapsing). Most of the basic contradictions and potentialities of European feudalism were found in Africa — the accumulation of surplus, the increasing population, and yet there was the same inability of the feudal social relations to accommodate population or to convert surplus to investment capital.[26] But a number of factors in Africa kept feudal modes of production viable and progressive.

First, in response to increasing desiccation, increasing population, increasing militarism, and with the aid of technological advances, the

[25] There is debate, of course, about the degree to which capitalist production emerged early and helped bring about the demise of feudalism, rather than the demise of feudalism bringing about capitalist production (cf. Sweezy et al. 1950–1953). The uneven development of forces and relations of production, however, make the former appear to be the case, when in fact, the latter must be the process which took place initially. As this occurred first in one place, and thereby influenced developments elsewhere, it is descriptively true that capitalism did later bring about the demise of feudalism in many areas. All societies of successive evolutionary epochs are more inclusive of and dominant over societies still existing with the productive relations of previous epochs.

[26] This is *contra* Goody (1971), who argues against the use of the term "feudalism" to describe the state structures of Africa. I do not want to underemphasize the real differences that existed between the social relations of production in Africa and in Europe, for example, in the greater investment in African artisans, the larger African armies, etc. but I think understanding is best achieved by examining similarities, for in this way we can attempt to theorize about the processes which produced the facts we see on the ground — the real job of science.

states of the Sudan belt and the proto-Bantu-speaking state organizations moved south and east. There was room for expansion, and these feudal societies (or segments of them splitting off by fission) could expand into areas relatively unoccupied or occupied by nonfeudal groups unable to resist the superior military organization of these feudal states.

Secondly, technological innovations (the adoption, invention, and perfection of several broad crop series — see Murdock 1959) allowed the exploitation of areas previously underutilized. With the appearance of forest-type crops (probably from Asia) the forest belts of West Africa and the Congo basin came to be successfully exploited with feudal modes of production (as well as other nonfeudal productive modes, of course), rather than just exist as impenetrable barriers. Europe lacked this diversity of agriculture. In short, the contradictions in African feudalism were *relieved* instead of *resolved* (into a qualitative transformation to capitalism).

Theoretically, once these "solutions" had been fully pursued, however, sharpening the contradictions in African feudal modes of production, new forms would have come into being — probably capitalist. But the fortuitous advantage of a wide range of exploitative strategies, abundant areas in which to implement them, and social organizations capable of fission meant that African feudalism was viable and healthy for a longer period than was the feudalism of Europe. The European penetration of Africa, however, and the great slave trade brought an end to the progressive social evolution of indigenous African societies.

The contradictions in European feudalism were resolved by the emergence of capitalism — and with this mode of production was required the never-ceasing search for markets, resources, and labor. As noted, the New World provided much of the resource base and Africa the labor necessary for the capital requirements of Europe's industrialism. Africa, moreover, became an important market source for the goods of Europe's industrial production (see Williams 1945). The slave trade decreased the continent's population by as much as one-third (Davidson 1961), and the social evolution of African societies became a function of capitalist modes of production. The viable and progressive feudalism of pre-European Africa was destroyed with the Atlantic slave trade, and this era of chattle slavery under capitalism completely distorted future social evolution on the continent. The point, however, is not that Africa was about to emerge as capitalist when crippled by the slave trade, the point is that African feudalism was at that time still vital; the contradictions were such that feudal relations of production could still be maintained and could be accommodated with solutions unavailable to Europe. Qualitative change was not necessitated. In population terms, expansion and growth *without* changing feudalism, was still possible.

The contradictions of feudal modes of production as manifested in

population and economics have been stressed. These contradictions were also manifest in their class base — between producers and those with control over producers. The resolution of this contradiction into capitalism did not change the basis of the system; that is, there was still a fundamentally antagonistic relationship between producers and those having control over producers.[27] The producers, however, increasingly came to sell only their labor and were still subject to the population laws of a mode of production which they did not control.

The population dynamics, then, of feudal modes of production dictated the potential of an ever-increasing population. This was required for the tasks of production, control over which rested in the hands of nonproducers. Large families were required for production, to insure (in the face of high mortality rates) reproduction and for the security of the aged (in a system where rewards for production were in kind, thus inhibiting the aged from providing for themselves). Disease and mortality had traditionally kept the population in check, plus (in Africa and perhaps earlier in European feudalism) expansion into less-developed and less-populated areas. Moreover, in Europe "excess" populations were shipped abroad to form settler colonies and remove them as a potential threat to the ruling classes.

But in spite of expansion, colonial ventures, technological innovations, and death, other factors sharpened the contradictions in the feudal epoch of Europe; increasing amounts of wealth remained unproductive. This wealth and the labor force made available by land enclosure movements to dispossess peasants were harnessed to capitalist production. The contradictions of feudal modes of production then find one expression in the facts of increasing wealth and population, neither of which were rationally productive. The only possible resolution of this contradiction was in capitalist modes of production in which both surplus wealth and population could be made productive. In Africa, expansion relieved the basic contradiction, and African feudal modes of production (and consequent population dynamics) remained viable until forever distorted by the penetration of Africa by Europe.

4.4. *Capitalism*

Perhaps the greatest mystification of population dynamics and social evolution has come in the past 150 years. During this time capitalism matured and entered its highest phase, imperialism, and the population

[27] Technically, there were more than two antagonistic classes under feudal modes of production — aristocrats, merchant/artisans, and peasants. Capitalism is the first mode of production which increasingly puts all the producers on one side as a class against all the exploiters on the other side.

growth rate worldwide increased from 0.4 percent per year to 2 percent per year (United Nations 1964). Malthus (1830), in response to the increasing human debris of eighteenth century capitalist production and as an attack on the poor laws, argued that population was outstripping its capacity to feed itself and that the starvation which was certain to result was, in fact, provident. His argument was basically that population expanded geometrically, while agricultural production expanded arithmetically. It was, of course, the proliferation of the underclasses that bothered Malthus primarily, just as it bothers contemporary population growth alarmists (see Huxley 1956; Osborn 1960; Erlich 1968; Hardin 1969).

Today, the composite population growth curves of much of Southeast Asia, most of Latin America and Africa, and the Black and Puerto Rican population of the United States are steep, whereas the population growth curves of Sweden, the Soviet Union, China in the 1970's, and the White middle and upper classes of Britain and the United States are relatively flat (and relatively unthreatening to neo-Malthusians). When the growth curves of *all* areas are combined into a *single* world population growth chart, the slope is still steep, and the population is increasing at considerably more than a linear rate. The implications sketched by population control advocates is the familiar Malthusian theme — disaster if the growth curves are not flattened (see Meadows et al. 1972). The composite world population growth chart is deceiving, however, for it disguises the most significant fact — population growth is greatest in underdeveloped parts of the world.

The correlations which ought to be of most interest are between resource distribution and control of production and the growth curves in different parts of the world. The steep curves are positively correlated with underdeveloped societies and oppressed segments of developed societies, and the relatively flat curves are correlated with societies (or segments of societies) in which producers control or have access to the results of production. The steep curves correlate positively with a lack of producer control; they reveal the population dynamics of underdevelopment. This will be argued to be the dynamics of capitalist exploitation.

There is little doubt that world population will continue to increase so long as population growth is necessary to capitalist modes of production. With decreasing mortality brought about by improved medical care[28] in response to demands of the working classes and peasants, it may even rise more steeply. The important fact is that *in spite of* population control

[28] Polgar (1975) suggests mortality declines began before the export of health measures. In any case, medical care contributed to declining mortality. The current world population growth rate is also more impressive when the lives lost in imperialist wars of the twentieth century are added — upwards of seventy-five million people have died as a result of these ventures.

programs and *in spite of* decreasing infant mortality (which allows larger families to be maintained with few children born) and in spite of death in war, no demographic change can alter the dynamics of population growth significantly until the productive system necessitating such dynamics is changed (see Mamdani 1972). This requires attention to the population dynamics of the capitalist mode of production. Hall has summarized this:

> As anthropologists we should be aware that the economic system of the West depends upon an increasing population and that in a critical way this system, as Polgar [1972] has pointed out, has *encouraged population growth* (1972:260, emphasis mine; see also Polgar 1972:210–211).

Capitalism is a mode of production in which the anarchistic expansion of production is a prime mover. But this expansion is not to accommodate the potential population increase as it may have been in classless societies; on the contrary, it is for the profits of a few. Great quantities of labor are necessary not only for the production itself, but also for keeping wages low with a reserve army of competitors for jobs. This anarchy in production is checked only by the ability of a population to purchase the goods produced, and herein lies an important contradiction in capitalist production, one that the system sooner or later will face.[29] Marx sums up this process of capitalist production:

> The labor population therefore produces along with the accumulation of capital produced by it, the means by which itself is made relatively superfluous, is turned into a relative surplus population; and it does this to an always increasing extent. This is a law of population peculiar to the capitalist mode of production; and in fact every specified historic mode of production has its own specific laws of population, historically valid within its limits alone. An abstract law of population exists for plants and animals only, and only insofar as man has not interfered with them (1967, I:631–632).

Capitalism thus requires an expanding population because it requires an expanding production. But for those *not* producing under capitalism, for those in control of production or having an adequate share of the proceeds of production, population growth curves are relatively flat. The steep growth curves of the working classes are essential primarily because of the demands of capitalist production, and it is only mortality that has kept the growth curves from being even larger than they are. A decrease in mortality, as mentioned above, will not substantially alter the causes for the high birth rate, nor will the basic population dynamics be altered.

Mamdani (1972) illustrates this quite clearly: he shows how and why a

[29] A situation already at work in some capitalist countries, such as in South Africa, where the country's consumer products cannot compete successfully in the rest of Africa or in other parts of the world, but whose major population, African, is not paid sufficiently to be able to purchase this production (see Magubane n.d.).

major birth control program in India's Punjab (sponsored by the Ford Foundation, Harvard University, and the Indian Government) failed. With care and detail Mamdani demonstrates that people are not poor because they have big families; they have large families because they are poor. The pressure on the land from great numbers of people does not mean farmers thereby control their population; more children mean that more land can be worked, more land can be rented to be worked (from those without sufficient numbers of children) which may result in savings that can be used to purchase more land. More children mean some can migrate to urban areas and send back money from their wage labor. People thereby see the population control program as an attack on their very existence. To be sure it is producers that are involved in decisions about the increase or decrease in family size, but it is the dynamics of capitalist production that dictates which decision makes rational survival sense to these producers — not being told that large families are not in their interests.

If, however, producers were in control of production, the lessons of history are clear — the population growth curve would flatten considerably.

China over the past twenty years furnishes a good example. The population growth rate of prerevolutionary China resembled that of many parts of the world (see Osborn 1960) underdeveloped as a consequence of capitalism (yet firmly locked into a dependency relation with capitalist powers through imperialism). But following the sequence of revolutions in China (1949, 1966) and the firm establishment of producer control, China has at the present brought its population growth rate to the low level of that of the developed capitalist countries (Sidel 1972).

Producer control eliminates the accrual of surplus labor value by an exploiting class. Planning is possible, and production for exchange no longer a necessary motive factor, as production for use is self-correcting. Vast reservoirs of reserve labor would no longer be necessary to drive wages down, and the anarchistic expansion would no longer be necessary; thus, not only freeing the producers in the developed capitalist nations from the threat to their rate of compensation, but emancipating the underdeveloped nations from the grip of imperialism.

"Overpopulation" is, from this view, not a problem of too many people, but of unequal resource distribution.[30] In fact, one of the true absurdities of capitalist "development" is that in its advanced imperialist phase, many nations of the world are, as *nations*, ostensibly *underpopulated.* That is, they do not have the necessary population required for an integrated economy, an economy not dependent on imperialist powers. A

[30] It must be emphasized, however, that so long as production remains for profit — for exchange rather than use — a more equitable distribution of wealth cannot, in fact, solve this problem.

nation with fewer than fifteen million people, many of whom must be relatively concentrated, can in no way have a modern integrated industrial economy without exploiting the production of foreign labor (as is the case, for example, with capitalist nations such as Sweden and West Germany).[31] This "underpopulation," however, only makes sense when the history of imperialist expansion and the demands of capitalist production are considered. For the demands of capitalism — of divide and rule, of dependency, and of selective underdevelopment — maintain, require, and bring about the balkanized appearance of Africa, South America, and other less-developed parts of the world, the familiar phenomenon of small nations with but a single export product, constantly at odds with their neighbors, often with an insufficient, but neverthless underfed, population. Nationalism, then, masks neocolonialism.

The population dynamics of capitalism can be seen in the high population *growth rates* (or at least natality rates) of these "underpopulated" nations — which will approximate the growth rates of so-called overpopulated (yet underdeveloped) nations such as India. Only with the elimination of imperialism can these rates be checked and regional economic integration (using the populations of several adjacent small nations) become a reality.

Imperialism fostered the development of small nations with insufficient populations and resources in order to be able to control the production of those people and resources. The only planning under capitalism is for profit maintenance, and thus all development is stifled aside from the monolithic single commodity exports characteristic of many small nations. Should these nations have sufficient people and resources to establish integrated economies, the potentiality of rejecting the imperialist power is much greater, and the profit structure of neocolonialism is possibly threatened.

An example can be seen in Ghana, a country whose economy is severely distorted by imperialist demands. Capitalist developers in Ghana utilize electricity from the Volta River hydroelectric development to smelt aluminium. Although there is ample bauxite available in West Africa, the bauxite for the Ghana smelters comes from Jamaica! The principal reason for this distorted type of production is to insure that an integrated aluminium industry — with Ghanaian ore, electricity, smelting, and finishing — does not develop. For so long as the industry is

[31] This is not, of course, to argue that all present individual nations must strive to have a population in excess of fifteen million; on the contrary, for regional economic integration across national boundaries would not only efficiently utilize areal populations, but promote international cooperation. As Polgar (1972:210) has stated, "Nowadays the abundance of people is no longer advantageous to anyone for economic reasons." Whether or not the world has sufficient numbers of people for global egalitarian production (for production for use rather than exchange) is a fact that could only be objectively determined in the circumstance.

dependent on other parts of the world — linked by imperialism — there is no threat to the capitalists that the industry could be nationalized or that control could be taken by producers, since Ghanaians do not have all the developed "parts" for the integrated industry. Nor, of course, does Jamaica. Nationalization is conceivable, but only on terms favorable to imperialists. Too much economic power in a single area unprotected by imperialist armies is to be avoided at any cost, for not only would this, if it could be controlled by producers, remove that much labor, resource, and market from imperialists; it would also constitute competition on the free world market. By encouraging shallow nationalism in West Africa, the possibility of uniting the necessary components of an integrated aluminium industry (not to speak of any other components of an integrated industrial economy) is extremely small. *Only* by uniting can the necessary population and resources be brought together. A regional unity or a pan-African unity is the only way of achieving the necessary economic integration for modern free industrial society (see Green and Seidman 1968), and the only way of throwing off the dependency (and the poverty/high population growth rate syndrome) of imperialism.

Thus, capitalist development under imperialism required underdevelopment, and one of the ways this was achieved was to allow the "incorporation" or independence of nations too small to possibly threaten the imperialist nations with an integrated economy. This is a matter of significance in understanding the population demands (and hostility to population control programs) of many smaller nations. Even in larger nations, capitalism in the stage of imperialism can only insure underdevelopment by keeping an integrated economy from arising, by distorting the development of the economies of these nations so that any attempt to emancipate themselves from the network of world capitalism is extremely difficult. Capitalism is not simply a disease. It has severely distorted the body politic of the world, and this makes it much more difficult to stop without a thorough analysis of its nature and consequences.

With the maintenance of capitalism there is little doubt that the world population growth curves will continue to appear essentially as they do. Some apologists have urged enforced population control (Erlich 1968; Hardin 1969) or other less subtle forms of genocide. As Meek has argued:

> After all, the advocacy of infanticide or the cessation of medical supplies to "overpopulated" countries is not very far from the advocacy of more widespread and efficient measures to reduce the population. The struggle against Malthusianism is an integral part of the struggle for peace in the world today (1971:48–49).

So long as capitalism continues as the dominant mode of production in

the world,[32] so too will rampant population growth continue in oppressed and underdeveloped areas. With the advent of producer control (which implies permeating many of the "national" barriers now inhibiting international cooperation), the existing population will produce for itself, and the population growth will be congruent with the needs of society, i.e. the producers. It may well be (on the strength of the Chinese case) that population increase will no longer be essential or desirable, and in such case, reproduction planning will undoubtedly be encouraged and come into being with no trouble.

It has been the argument throughout that reproduction planning has been practiced in history. Because after the emergence of class structures in history the modes of production are such that control is removed from producers, so too do the producers no longer really control decisions about population planning, but reproduce in terms of the demands of the production system, now controlled by ruling classes. Thus, population programs under capitalism based on moral suasion (or even enforced schemes of some variety) — short of severe genocide — are not going to be adequate and will be likely to be doomed to failure. Reproduction planning is a function of the demands of social production, and this is out of the hands of producers under capitalism. The social relations of production under capitalism dictate the population dynamics, and only when production is once again controlled by producers will reproduction planning be once again their decision. Productive requirements established under planned production in the control of producers may require continued population growth in some areas and not in others. This cannot be predicted in advance. First, the conditions have to be established which enable it to take place. Freedom and planning of any sort is simply impossible until producers can once again emancipate their labor and direct its activity.

5. CONCLUSIONS

A theory of social production and its implications has been sketched. It has been shown that with a dialectical materialist perspective, the fallacies and errors of inductive empiricism in outlining such a theory are avoided; facts may then be accounted for instead of used to "build" theory, change may be seen as inherent instead of introduced and mys-

[32] It simply cannot be argued that most populations of the world today, even in more remote regions, are unaffected by capitalism in one way or another (see Faris 1972d). As it became a world force under imperialism, it has successfully permeated or otherwise affected essentially every society in the world. Thus, even in those few societies of the world whose subsistance economies are not capitalist, it may well be that capitalist modes of production govern or affect the population dynamics of those societies.

teriously external to the system, and the processual character of evolution is the explicit center of focus, rather than the functional and adaptational specification of its consequences.

The argument has concentrated on the importance of a theory of social production in clarifying the disjunction between human society and other animal societies, and on the improved perspective it affords in understanding population dynamics. It is argued that the objectification of labor with the recognition of labor potential in society meant decisions could be made about alternative or differential allocation. This allowed labor to be projected for social use. In terms of population, it enabled human society to emancipate itself from the population control of nature, and allowed population growth to play a progressive role in social evolution. Accordingly, it is argued that postpartum sexual restrictions, infanticide, abortion, and contraception are reproduction planning mechanisms, not population control devices. They came into being to facilitate a productive force, not to inhibit growth. The freedom to plan was the emancipation from biological determinism. This was the essence of progressive production, and clearly demarcated human society from that of animals.

As classes evolved, decisions about differential allocation of labor were no longer in the hands of producers, and the population regulation they had wrested from nature was now surrendered to the production demands of ruling classes as population dynamics became a function of class-based modes of production. This is illustrated in the differential history and population dynamics in the feudalism of Europe and Africa, and it is further traced in the necessities of capitalist production. It is argued that in spite of efforts such as moral persuasion and population planning, reduction of the population growth curves in underdeveloped areas is impossible (see Mamdani 1972) until producers once again control their production. Population planning is, in this view, production planning and can be facilitated only with producer control.

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Population Pressure and Methods of Cultivation: A Critique of Classless Theory

EDWARD J. NELL

Population pressure has recently emerged as a fashionable explanation both for the shift from semi-nomadic slash and burn agriculture to settled cultivation and for the intensification of already settled cultivation. Thus Boserup (1965) and her followers account for an entire sequence of agricultural transformations through population changes. Others explain the fifteenth-century decline of rents and agricultural prices coupled with the prosperity of laborers and artisans by the decline in population following the Black Death. Or again, a seemingly new orthodoxy, which replaces the Hamilton-Keynes thesis, holds that the Elizabethan inflation resulted not so much from an influx of New World treasure, as from the rapid growth of population in the sixteenth century.

Yet these arguments frequently conflate very different economic doctrines. Textbook marginal productivity theory explains change by the movement in costs, given changes in factor supplies, but assumes those factors are of uniform quality. Ricardian theory also addresses the supply side of the question, but assumes that land is of variable quality, and so treats the labor and land markets quite differently. (Both simple marginal productivity theory and the Ricardian model can be found in the works of E. H. Phelps Brown and M. M. Postan.) Finally appeal is sometimes made to "supply and demand," pure and simple, with no attempt to go behind the supply curve to the original conditions of production. A population increase raises the demand for food and land and increases the supply of labor; hence, food prices and rents rise, while wages fall. (The outstanding example of this type of thinking is B. H. Slicher van Bath.)

Not only are all of these very different doctrines, even the arguments are not mutually compatible. In particular, Bosreup's thinking, more closely attuned to anthropology than the others, compels critical reconsideration of the rest. For her, description of intensification is incompat-

ible with the smooth adjustments pictured by conventional theory, and her criticisms of the Ricardian movement to marginal land are well taken, though not necessarily decisive. But, most importantly, she requires us to think about the effects of population pressure in an altogether new way. All three of the conventional models postulate a direct connection between population changes and changes in factor supplies and/or final demands. But the "factor of production" is not population, it is work. An increase in population does not lead directly to an increase in work; instead, the effects proceed indirectly, through pressure on food supplies, to changes in work habits as the pattern of cultivation is intensified. Any given method of agriculture must be described according to the work habits it imposes, and any changes in cultivation imply changes in the nature, amount, timing, and conditions of work. These will not come about easily for the process involves major social change.

But once this is understood, population pressure is no longer decisive. It may be important, but then again it may not. The issue is the changing pattern and intensity of work, to which class relationships and coercion are at least as relevant as population pressure.

Marx certainly rejected all theories which sought to ground economic or social change in autonomous population changes; he particularly attacked Malthus. Many current population theories are explicitly anti-Malthusian — Boserup for instance. But from the Marxian perspective the arguments tend to be trivial. For neo-Malthusians, the methods of agricultural production set limits on the possible size of populations; for the more modern population theorists, it is the pressure of population that determines which of the possible methods of agricultural production will be adopted. That is, population pressure will cause intensification of land use, rather than, as the neo-Malthusians believe, the intensity of land use being a consequence of climate and the natural fertility of the soil, a consequence which places an upper limit on population.

The obvious comment is that both could be right — the causal influences could be reciprocal. Population growth caused by expanded agricultural output presses at a certain point upon the available land, given the method of cultivation. To support the expanded population requires a shift to more intensive methods. Once the shift is made, output per man-year, though not per man-hour, is increased and population growth can continue. Indeed, this seems to be precisely what the moderns are saying; they differ from the Malthusians not in denying the connection between abundance or scarcity in the food supply and a growing or stagnant population, but rather in emphasizing the importance of population pressure in bringing about greater intensity of cultivation.

The quarrel over Malthusianism, then, is a sham. There are two variables: population size relative to arable land and intensity of cultiva-

tion. Further, there are two equations: the population that a given land area can support increases with the intensity of cultivation, and the larger the population, the greater the pressure will be to intensify cultivation. A number of *technical* questions arise here — do the equations have a solution? Is there more than one possible solution? What are the properties of the solutions? However, there is surely no quarrel of principle. The two propositions together determine the two variables.

An illustration will show both how mechanical the argument is and how strongly it depends on its own assumptions. Both relationships show the variables moving in the same direction. It would be natural to assume that the Malthusian would exhibit diminishing returns, while the Boserupian would show increasing resistance to intensifying cultivation as population per arable land area increased. We could express this in a diagram (Figure 1), plotting population per arable acre (P/A) on the horizontal axis and labor-time per acre (L/A) on the vertical. P/A has to reach a certain level before the M curve begins to rise, but it rises with increasing steepness,

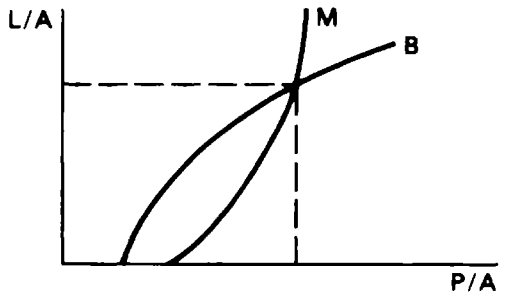

Figure 1.

reflecting diminishing returns. The B curve also begins only after a certain level of P/A is reached. If the initial P/A for the B curve lies above the initial point for the M curve, then population will be governed exclusively by Malthusian considerations — pressures to intensify are too weak or make their appearance too late. Otherwise the two forces will interact. Where the curves cross, population pressures and methods of cultivation will be in balance. Should population rise above this equilibrium point it could not be supported because the pressures to intensify (as exhibited in the B curve) would not be strong enough to push the society to the method of cultivation required.

So far so good, though it is all a bit like engineering. (We can perhaps imagine a society moving out along these curves, but can we imagine it moving *back and forth*?) Are there really diminishing returns to intensification? Many economists think there may be increasing returns. And will there necessarily be increasing resistance to intensification? Suppose with increasing organization the ability to resist progressively weakens. Then

we have the situation illustrated in Figure 2, in which intensity of cultivation is exclusively determined by Boserup.

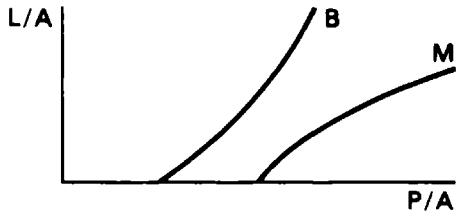

Figure 2.

This sort of analysis is neat, but from a Marxian standpoint it is totally sterile. Neither of the "variables" are what they seem, nor are they capable of varying in the ways postulated. Population size depends upon family life and upon the work habits of the society. It is interwoven with the most basic strands of social life and cannot possibly be considered autonomous. The rise of the population depends among other things upon the marriage age, the desire and pressure for large or small families, the normal work expected of women, the knowledge and skill in means of birth control, and the effectiveness of traditional medicine and its consequences both for survival in childbirth and for life expectancy. A population too large or growing too rapidly for the society's land and resources can be controlled in a variety of traditional ways — through exposure of babies and emigration, through a rise in the marriage age, through limitations on family size in certain sections of society, and so on. Similarly, a population too small for resources can be expanded. The important point is that the size and rate of growth of population should not be considered *exogenous*; population pressure does not *impinge on* a society, it is *created by* the society.

Let us take as an example the situation often offered as a counter-instance, namely the rapidly growing populations all over the Third World. There can be no reasonable doubt that this phenomenon is pointing toward a catastrophe of almost unimaginable proportions. But it should also be clear that these population increases are anything but autonomous (and, to make the ideological point, *therefore* no one's responsibility). They are the direct consequence of imperialism. They result from the impact of the advanced technology and market systems of the West on largely peasant agriculture. The impact of modern medicine is widely acknowledged, yet at least some of these societies *could have* adapted to this impact, but have not done so. Generalizing in this area is dangerous, but it is generally true in peasant societies that large families are a good thing. The children can do enough work, after a time, to more than pay their way. Moreover, they are the parent's old age insurance, and it is important that enough children survive to support the aged

parents, especially so as the market comes to dominate the countryside. Better too many children than too few. The high rates of population growth in the Third World can thus be seen, in part, as rural society taking out insurance against the vicissitudes resulting from the impact of the West.

Now consider the other variable in population pressure explanations of social change, the intensity of cultivation. This is not to be confused with output per man-year, and it had little to do with output per acre. It refers to the input of effort per man per year. Cultivation is said to become more intense when a new method is substituted for an old, and output per man-hour in the old is higher than in the new, but output per man-year is greater in the new. In other words "intensifying agricultural production" means working less productively but harder or longer and so producing more, perhaps substantially more.

In Marxian terms the point seems very simple. Let s_1 be the old, higher rate of surplus-value, and s_2 the new; let L_1 be the old amount of labor time worked, and L_2 the new. Then, for $s_1L_1 < s_2L_2$ while $s_1 > s_2$ — that is, for the *mass* of surplus-value to increase while the *rate* falls — the proportional increase in labor time worked must exceed the proportional fall in the rate of surplus value:

$$\left|\frac{dL}{L}\right| > \left|\frac{ds}{s}\right|$$

In primitive societies, the rate of surplus value is defined by the proportion of time that cultivators and direct laborers must work to produce their own support, divided into total output. But much time which *could* be spent working is actually spent in other activities. This time could be called "potential surplus-value" and could be taken as evidence of the affluence of the system. In a sense, it is. But, in actual fact, that time can rarely be harnessed without a major change in social structure. It may be potential, but it remains only potential; production is not the name of the game.

As a consequence, the new method of production, say settled cultivation as opposed to slash and burn, will be characterized by a rate of surplus value composed of less *relative* and more *absolute* surplus value. The labor time needed to produce necessities will be higher, but the length of the average working day will be longer.

Putting the matter in Marxian terms is useful because it leads to the heart of the matter. The assumption implicit among population theorists is that enlarged net output goes to support an enlarged population. Well, it may or it may not. What happens to it surely depends on the method of production. This is the subject of the theory of surplus-value.

To develop these ideas further in general terms would be inappropriate for the limited purposes of this paper. Instead, I shall argue that population pressure need not in general, though it may on occasion, be part of the explanation of intensification of cultivation, while, by contrast, the organization of production, especially coercion and competition, should be. To make this argument I shall critically examine what is widely regarded as one of the best and most imaginative statements of the modern population pressure thesis, Boserup's *The conditions of agricultural growth* (1965).

Just where she is most original, Boserup's argument is most questionable. She contends that population pressure will cause or bring about a shift to more intensive methods, which are less productive per man-hour, though because of the longer and harder work entailed, more productive per hectare and per year. These methods will normally have been known to the society before, and may even have been used on occasion, as in the case of intensive market gardening on the fringes of early medieval towns. She rightly points to the considerable evidence that both primitive and peasant societies are capable, when it suits them, of very rapidly assimilating new products and new techniques. The refusal to adopt the new methods should not, then, be ascribed to ignorance, nor to the inertia of tradition, but rather to an economic judgment that the extra output is not worth the extra work.

This raises two sets of questions. The first concerns her claim that, initially, the more intensive methods are not adopted, though known and understood, because the extra output is not worth the extra work; the second, her claim that when adopted, they are introduced in response to population pressure.

In connection with the first, there seems (to an economist) to be an implied assumption that work will not be done beyond the point where its marginal disutility is just compensated by the extra output. But this kind of thinking is not consonant with the evidence she cites. For example, under long fallow cultivation there are often periods of hunger, because not enough land has been cleared. Arguably, on a rational calculation, the extra output would have been worth more than the disutility of the additional labor. But, "Anthropologists stress the lack of foresight and the general inclination to shun hard agricultural work" (Boserup 1965:54). If so, might not such lack of foresight and disinclination to work account for the unwillingness to adopt more intensive methods, even if they were substantially more productive per man-hour, provided they required substantially more labor per year? There are other reasons for not working more than the judgment that the extra reward is not worth it, and by her own account these apparently were operative on occasion. Boserup's argument is that more productive methods

will not be adopted until population pressure causes a sufficient increase in the utility of extra output to offset the disutility of extra work.

But the failure to adopt more intensive and more productive methods can be explained as quite a different sort of economic calculation. It can be seen as the consequence of switching from less to more intensive cultivation in piecemeal fashion, in a setting where production is organised on an individualistic basis modified by certain communal rights. The argument is relatively simple, and depends on the fact that a process only partially adopted may set up a peculiar pattern of payoffs. Consider an example discussed by Boserup. According to her

> . . . grazing rights may delay . . . the change-over to feeding with cultivated fodder plants, because an individual cultivator who desires to introduce this innovation would have to carry the full burden of producing the fodder and feeding it to the animals while [the] benefit of reduced pressure on communal grazing land accrues to other cultivators. (1965:85–86).

This is an acute observation, but it has nothing particularly to do with grazing rights, and it provides an alternative explanation for the resistance to intensive methods. Wherever this pattern of costs and payoffs obtains, the introduction of a more productive method can be blocked. What counts is that the "full burden" on the innovator must reduce his earnings below what he could make on the old system, while the "benefits of reduced pressure" going to noninnovators should raise their earnings above what they could make under the new more productive method. This can be represented in a "game theory" table (Figure 3). We simply divide the society into two groups, A and B. For these purposes we need not specify which represents the innovators, or even how large they are relative to one another. Let the new method be N and the old O. The initial position, where both groups use O, we shall take as the zero point. If both groups shifted to N, both would make a gain, g. But if either A or B shifted to N and the other did not, the one who shifted would make a loss, −1 (from bearing the full burden), while the one who stuck with O would make a larger gain, G (reaping the "benefits of reduced pressure" on resources.)

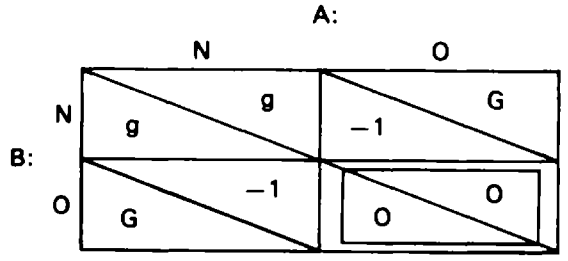

Figure 3.

As we can see at a glance, whichever course A chooses, B's best choice is O, since G is greater than g and O is greater than -1. Whichever course B chooses, A's best choice is O, since G is greater than g and O is greater than -1. By not making the shift when the other does, one party gains more. By making the shift when the other does not, the other party loses more than if he stood pat. Strategy O, O will therefore tend to be adopted, even though N, N is better for both groups.

This pattern of benefits and burdens during the process of switching methods is not implausible for many of the cases Boserup discusses; it relieves her of the necessity of arguing that, in general, relatively extensive, long fallow methods of cultivation are more productive per man-hour. More importantly, it makes it clear that lack of sufficient population pressure is not the reason for not adopting the more productive methods.

The same kind of argument can be applied to another topic. Boserup explains the coexistence of different methods of cultivation by introducing the additional assumption, which does not follow from her main argument, that the rate of technological change depends on the rate of population growth. Thus, the higher the rate of population growth, the faster the spread of the plow, or perhaps, for it is not quite clear, the faster we pass from stick to hoe to plow to tractor. So long as the population growth is slow, so also will be technological change, and we can expect to find methods of cultivation coexisting. "Thus, the slowly penetrating new systems . . . would . . . coexist for long periods with older systems within the same village or . . . region" (1965:56).

Now consider the argument we have just examined, but take, this time, the shift from long fallow to short. We shall have to be rather hypothetical, but will try to follow Boserup (1965:30–33, 80–81). Those who shift to short fallow cultivation have to expend more labor in hoeing, weeding, and manuring during the growing season, but their greatest effort must come in clearing the fields of roots and stones. This is a task in which teamwork pays off well. The larger the group making the shift the greater the manpower available for clearing, and the more easily and rapidly fields can be cleared. But those who do not shift to settled cultivation will find themselves better off as more make the shift, for there will be fewer claimants to the better plots of forest or bush land. Thus, if only a small group shifts to settled cultivation, they will find clearing and also harvesting (in which a large labor force is valuable) difficult. If a larger group shifts, providing sufficient labor, there may well be a significant reduction of pressure on forest or bush plots.

The circumstances we have described can be expressed in diagrammatic form (Figure 4).

If a small group shifts, forest cultivators benefit from reduced pressure, while the small group is actually worse off. If a large group shifts, forest

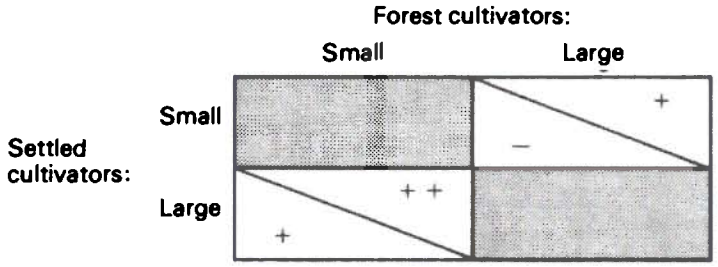

Figure 4.

cultivators benefit considerably, and the newly settled cultivators also gain. Now the question is, how considerable are these gains and losses? Suppose population is pushing against a forest area in which there are two grades of land, one considerably worse than the other. The gain to practitioners of the old method from a switch of even a small number may then be more than the gain from the new method if everyone pursued it. As before, a small group shifting might lead to burdens sufficient to overbalance any gain from the new method. In such circumstances the case we have just mentioned would hold; even though short fallow methods were superior in productivity per man-hour to long fallow ones, they would not be adopted.

But the pattern of gains and losses might be rather different. Suppose that a small movement from the old method to the new resulted in little or no benefit to practitioners of the old. Only a fairly large shift would reduce the pressure on resources enough to yield perceptible gains. The situation is illustrated in Figure 5.

We now identify one group as Large, the other as Small and rewrite Figure 3 on the basis of Figure 4. For Large, N is the best choice whatever Small does, since g is greater than O, and g^* is greater than O. (It is immaterial whether g^* is less than g or greater than g, though presumably g^* is less than g.) For Small, O is the best choice whatever Large does, since G is greater than g and O is greater than -1. Hence, the "equilibrium outcome" will be, as indicated, (G, g^*), even though the total benefits may be less than in (g,g) if $(g-g^*)$ is greater than $(G-g)$. Thus an inferior method may continue to be employed by a minority, even though everyone would be better off if it were wholly phased out. We do not have

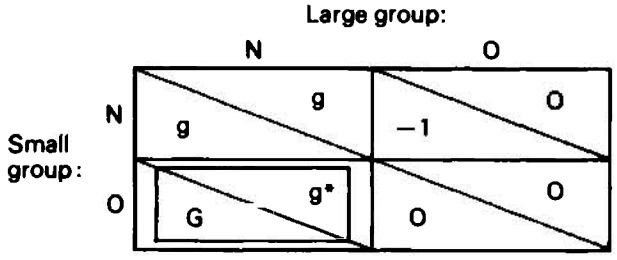

Figure 5.

to assume, as Boserup does, that the rate of innovation closely depends on the rate of population growth to explain the coexistence of different methods of cultivation.

The second set of questions I raised concern Boserup's claim that intensification of land use results from population pressure. The main difficulty here is that her claim is vague. The exact pattern of incentives is not explained, nor are the institutions or mechanisms through which the pressure exerts itself identified. It has to be so, for a more precise specification would raise unanswerable questions. For example, why should population pressures not be resisted? Many primitive and not-so-primitive peoples have practiced crude forms of population control, such as exposure. Alternatively, population pressure, leading to land shortage, might lead to a rise in the marriage age of women, and a consequent reduction in the natural reproduction rate. There are many other possible effects of population pressure which could in a similar way lead back to a reduction of that pressure. Why are these ruled out and the typical response taken as a rise in the intensity of cultivation?

Secondly, why should population pressure lead a society to value additional output more highly in terms of labor? Boserup's implicit argument seems to be that increased population with a given method of cultivation will, after a point, result in reduced consumption per head, thus raising the marginal utility of output. According to conventional theory, work will be performed up to the point where its marginal disutility will just be compensated by the utility of the additional output. Hence, population pressure, in this view, would naturally lead to increased willingness to work harder.

This is absurd. Economists are increasingly skeptical of the utility or material incentives approach to the labor market in advanced market economies, and it is certainly unnecessary to carry such analytical baggage through the underdeveloped world.[1] The reasons for this skepticism would carry us too far afield. But it should be obvious that the argument above simply does not answer the question. Instead of working harder, a society might expand the area of land under its control, by conquest if necessary. Alternatively, it might encourage emigration or colonization. At times, it might simply accept reduced consumption or enforce such reductions on powerless and ill-fated groups within it. If a population increase is supposed to lead to reduced consumption per head, the

[1] Traditional, or neo-Classical theory, if interpreted strictly, takes far too simple-minded a view of the incentives which will lead people to work, as the Hawthorne experiments and the writings of A. H. Maslow and others have shown. If we interpret neo-Classical broadly, so as to include in remuneration such factors as status and prestige, the views of others, control over own working conditions, the attention and interest of superiors, and so on, we effectively make the theory vacuous — the point at which the marginal disutility of work equals the extra remuneration offered becomes whatever point at which works stops. For a nice parody, see Robinson (1952); for a discussion of incentives see Brown (1960).

exact mechanism and incentive pattern which leads to this must be explained.

One piece of traditional Ricardian analysis, his discussion of differential rent, does suggest a very precise way in which population pressures would affect consumption per head in a primitive society, such as one practicing forest or bush cultivation. According to Boserup (1965:79–81) all members of a tribe have a general right to practice cultivation in a certain area, but families develop specific rights to particular plots. Then ". . . with increasing population, as good plots become somewhat scarce . . . a family is likely to become more attached to the plots they have been cultivating . . . because it is becoming difficult to find better plots elsewhere. . ." (1965:80). Boserup sees this as a reason for shortening the period of fallow; families hurry back to the better plots. Perhaps. A better alternative would be to develop a system for adjudicating and enforcing specific rights; then, when population increased, progressively more plots of land would be cultivated, and a systematic and enforceable difference in prosperity would emerge between those families with specific rights to the better plots of land and the rest. This is in addition to the distinction discussed by Boserup between those who possess general rights to cultivate and "strangers" who do not.

This leads to perhaps the most important criticism of her argument. Once a class society emerges, another explanation for intensification of land use (in her sense) is available, one that responsible, non-Marxist scholars tend cautiously to avoid, coercion. A certain increase in output needed to support an increased population can be got only by a more than proportional increase in hard work. Even if we question Boserup's argument in general, this must surely have been the case sometimes. The desiccated, anemic, neo-Classical conclusion is that the implied fall in average consumption per head provides an incentive to work harder. Why not an incentive to make others to work harder? Population pressure is surely one of the oldest and most obvious factors behind military expansion. But it is not the only, nor perhaps even the main, factor.

For if it becomes possible for one class or group to make others work harder for its benefit, then they may be motivated to do so whether there is population pressure or not. Once we admit that coercion is a factor, population pressure as an explanatory variable recedes into the background. We should not think of coercion as physical force primarily. Undoubtedly, it does rest on force, but the technology of intimidation is multifaceted and reached a state of high development early in civilized history.

Settled cultivators are easier to tax and control. A ruling class may compel intensive cultivation not only for the additional output, but also for greater convenience and certainty in obtaining the surplus. Recognition of this may be one reason behind the refusal of contemporary

peasants still practicing forest cultivation to take advantage of apparently generous offers of government advice and technical assistance to adopt more modern methods (Boserup 1965:33:65). To develop this further would be to go beyond a critique of Boserup. Once we allow that coercion and exploitation are possible, and, indeed, the normal case, we do not need to rely on population pressure for explanation (though it may still, of course, be correct in some cases). On the contrary, changes in the relative strengths of classes and competing factions, and the causes of these changes (among which population pressure might figure, along with many other factors) become the basic explanatory variables. Boserup's most important contribution is to show that changes in the pattern of cultivation are social changes. Such changes come about through the exercise of power and influence, political as well as economic. Such power cannot be reduced to mere numbers; the system not the size is what counts.

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